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IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF COURT REPORTING PERSONNEL WHO COMPLETED A TWO-YEAR PROGRAM IN COURT REPORTING AT A NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION IN ALBERTA

BY

© BERNICE BOTTAS

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SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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IN
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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF COURT REPORTING PERSONNEL WHO COMPLETED A TWO-YEAR PROGRAM IN COURT REPORTING AT A NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION IN ALBERTA, submitted by Bernice G. Bottas, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

Supervisor

Henry R. Ziel

Konrad

Date February 13/81

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my son James.

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to identify those characteristics of court reporting personnel who had completed a two-year program in court reporting at a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution in Alberta which provided them with the basic entry skills so that they could become employed as freelance or official court reporters. The population of this study consisted of 62 "court reporters."

A questionnaire containing 42 statements was constructed. Demographic, classification, nominal, and interval data were collected by the use of this instrument. Prior to being used in the major investigation, the questionnaire was subjected to a pilot study and revised. All data from the 60 completed and returned questionnaires were analyzed and placed in tabular form.

The research data revealed the following characteristics: successful court reporters as students were in their late teens and were single; English was their first language; they completed an academic program of study in high school; they were high school graduates; they attained a Grade 12 academic average of 70% or better; they attained 70% or better in English 30 or 33; they had not necessarily studied another shorthand system; they studied typewriting in high school; they played a musical instrument; they were involved in extracurricular activities in high school; they were employed prior to entry into the court reporting program of study; they were not employed while enrolled in the court reporting program of study; they were involved in sports activities in high school; they enjoyed reading and

felt they were "very good" readers; they were able to cope with discouragement and stress; and they were "above average" to "very high" in level of persistence when they undertook an activity.

Each of the 13 characteristics that was identified in this research was placed in one of these classifications: personal, educational, extracurricular and leisure time, and personality.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the use of machine shorthand for court reporting has existed since 1868 when John Pratt of Greenville, Alabama received a patent from the United States Patent Office for the first American shorthand machine. Clark (1979) advises the patent number granted to Pratt was Number 81,000 (p. 46). Since then, and because of technological developments, the components of the shorthand machine have been modified a number of times to its present configuration.

Machine shorthand has been used successfully for several years as a shorthand system at all levels of the judicial system in Canada for the purpose of recording verbatim the necessary dialogue of the proceedings of the courtroom. As freelance reporting increases in Canada, and as conference, as well as court reporting, become the order of the day, machine shorthand will find increased use in a broader spectrum of Canadian society.

Machine shorthand has been taught in both private and public non-university, postsecondary institutions in the United States for several decades. However, court reporting was not taught in a formal postsecondary school setting in Canada until 1972.

In order to prepare individuals to meet the needs of the Alberta judicial system, machine shorthand was first taught in September, 1972, at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), Edmonton, Alberta. At that time, the decision was made that the program would be two years in length. In the court reporting program, machine shorthand is the only shorthand system taught; and it has been an integral part of the skill development program for court reporters.

Since it was first initiated as one of the programs at NAIT, the total intake of students into the program has been 224. Before an applicant is accepted into this program, the prospective student is given a preliminary interview with the program head and is asked to complete an admission application. The educational requirements for entrance into the court reporting program are published in the school calendar. Applications of prospective students who successfully pass the preliminary interview and have the necessary admission requirements are placed before a Selection Committee that consists of: Program Head, Court Reporting; Department Head, Business and Applied Arts; and the Registrar. To select students, this Committee reviews the application that the student completed; the results of the preliminary interview with the program head; and the quality of the student's investigation into the court reporting field. The members of this Committee also employ their intuition regarding the applicant's likelihood to succeed in the court reporting program.

Empirical data that have been collected over the past eight years show that the withdrawal rate for students who leave the court reporting program prior to completion is approximately 48%. The remaining 52% of the students who have completed the requirments for the court reporting program not only completed the prescribed program but have all been employed as either a freelance or official court reporter.

Johnson (1979), in correspondence with the researcher, indicated that he had available data which show the rate of attrition for court reporting students in institutions throughout North America to be between 60 and 90%. Johnson did not identify the reasons why the students left the court reporting programs prior to completion nor did he identify the characteristics that a court reporter should possess.

A review of the standard indices that report the results of educational research show that no research has been conducted to date that have identified the characteristics of court reporting personnel who have completed a two-year program in court reporting that will enable them to become employed and to progress in this occupation.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The purpose of this study was to identify those characteristics of court reporting personnel who had completed a two-year program in court reporting at a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution in Alberta which provided them with the basic entry skills so that they could become employed as freelance or official court reporters.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objective of this study was to identify those characteristics of court reporting personnel who had completed a two-year program in court reporting at a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution in Alberta.

The following objectives were used to support the major objective of the study:

1. To identify the graduates of the court reporting program at NAIT and who were employed as freelance reporters in Alberta at the time of this study.
2. To identify the graduates of the court reporting program at NAIT and who were employed as official court reporters in Alberta at the time of this study.
3. To place each characteristic that was identified from this

study into broad groups of classifications.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It would appear from the number of early withdrawals from the court reporting program that the two criteria, educational requirments and student interviews, presently used for acceptance into this program have been less than successful in identifying those individuals who will complete the two-year court reporting program.

At the time of the study, a listing of characteristics that might be used to predict success of a student enrolled in the court reporting program was not available. The results of this study might provide such a list of worker characteristics that may be used by guidance personnel in selecting students who wish to become enrolled in a court reporting program.

The study may also have significance because other researchers may wish to use the worker characteristics that are identified in this study as a base for refining and adding characteristics that are related to a court reporter.

Programs in court reporting are offered in both private and public schools in North America. It is possible that this study may have significance for these programs because the results of the study may be adapted to both private and public education sectors.

LIMITATIONS

This study had its limitations. The population of the study was limited to those persons who had graduated from the two-year court reporting program at NAIT and who were employed in Alberta as either freelance or official court reporters at the time of this study.

As well, the study was limited by the questions that were included on the research instrument.

The study was limited by the characteristics identified in this research.

Another limitation of this study was that it did not investigate characteristics that are associated with the ethical and courtroom behaviour of a court reporter such as adherence to the code of ethics, dress regulations, integrity, and confidentiality.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The operational definitions which specifically apply to this study are:

Court Reporter

A review was made of three occupational classification reference texts that are normally used by manpower workers to identify and code work that is customarily performed by individuals. The reference texts that were reviewed were: The International Standard Classification, which is an international standard classification for the collection and comparison of occupational information at the international level; the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, which contains the names and definitions of 35,550 titles for the various occupations found in the American economy; and the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations, Vol. I, which provides a systematic classification structure in which all occupations for the working population of Canada can be categorized. In total, approximately 20,000 occupational titles have been classified in the latter reference.

Although these reference sources list occupational titles, they do not provide a definitive definition for the term "court reporter."

These authoritative sources do list the duties and the responsibilities that are normally performed by a court reporter. Because the current study is a Canadian study, the duties and responsibilities for a court reporter will be taken from the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations, Vol. I.

Accordingly, the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations, Vol. I, (1971) lists the duties and responsibilities of a court reporter thus:

> Makes verbatim records of proceedings by shorthand writing or using shorthand writing machine. Attends meetings, lectures, courts of law, parliamentary sittings and other proceedings, and makes verbatim records in rapid shorthand or using shorthand-writing machine. Reads portion of transcript during trial or other proceedings on request of judge or other official. Dictates shorthand notes to typist or into dictating machine or passes notes to stenographer for transcription. May perform typing duties. May attend a specific type of proceeding and be designated accordingly, Hansard Reporter (p. 172).

Characteristic

A review of the literature for educational psychology, sociology, and business education was made to arrive at an operational definition for the term characteristic. The literature review did not identify a satisfactory definition for the term characteristic. It was evident from this review that the authors who write on such subjects as personality and character prefer to use the noun form of the adjective characteristic. In the interest of education, the interchangeability of these terms must cease and the meaning for these terms clarified. Symonds (1930) supported this position when he wrote: "Those interested in education and psychology need to clarify the meaning of the terms personality and character. Until there is general delimitation of the meaning of these terms and agreement as to their usage, confusion in discussion is bound to result" (p. 281).

Lowen (1958), in his book Physical Dynamics of Character Structure, wrote: "The main thing about the character is the fact that it represents a typical pattern of behavior or an habitual direction" (p. 107). In further discussing character, this author said: "It (character) is a mode of response which is set, congealed or structured. It has a "characteristic" quality which always stamps it as the mark of the person" (p. 107).

The definition given by Cronbach for the term character was accepted for this study. According to Cronbach (1954) "Character may be defined as the way the individual makes choices which affect the welfare of others" (p. 577). This noted educational psychologist has identified five levels of character:

1. The amoral
2. The self-centered
3. The conforming-conventional
4. The irrational-conscientious
5. The rational-conscientious (p. 617)

This definition will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Program

The definition for program given by Pautler (1971) in his book Teaching Shop and Laboratory Subjects was accepted for use in this study. According to this author, "Program is defined as the pursuit of a certain specialization such as cosmetology, electronics, etc" (p. 52). He differentiates program from a course or unit this way: "Course is defined as one segment of the total program. A unit is still a smaller sub-division of a course" (p. 52).

POPULATION

Between the years 1972-79 there were 95 individuals who had successfully completed the two-year court reporting program at the Institute. Of these 95 graduates, 62 were employed in Alberta as either freelance or official court reporters at the time of the study. These individuals constituted the population of this research.

INSTRUMENTATION

A review of the literature on instrument design was made to identify the most appropriate type of instrument to be used to collect data for this study. Other purposes of this literature review were for the researcher: to learn how a research instrument is organized; to learn how to phrase a statement so that it expresses the intent of what the researcher wants to say; to learn how to write statements using the correct research terminology to minimize ambiguity; and to learn to sequence questions on a research instrument.

From the review of the literature on instrument design, it was decided by the researcher that a questionnaire would be used to collect data for this study. A questionnaire was selected as the means of collecting data because of the following advantages: it can be easily mailed to members of the population; it can be readily reproduced; and data collected with this type of an instrument is objective and can be relatively easily analyzed. Although the use of a questionnarie does have its advantages, it also has a number of major disadvantages such as: respondent's misinterpretation of statements on the questionnaire; time needed by the participants to complete the questionnaire; and the possibility of a low rate of return.

The research instrument was prepared in consultation with the major advisor of the study. The purpose of this consultation was to provide the researcher with direction and guidance in the processes used to write a research questionnaire that is objective.

Three different levels of measurement were included in the questionnaire. The first level of questions was to collect demographic data using questions of this nature:

> Is English your first language: ____ Yes ____ No

The second level of questions was used to collect classification data using questions like:

> Prior to being admitted to the court reporting
> program did you work: Part-Time ____________
> Full-Time ____________
> Neither ____________

The third level of questions was designed for use with a modified Likert scale using an interval level of measurement such as:

> In physical activity, do you perceive yourself
> to be:

1	2	3	4	5
Slow		Average		Quick

The instrument that was designed for this study was reviewed by a specialist in instrument design from the Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, The University of Alberta. The purpose of this review was to analyze the format of the instrument, the sequence of questions, and to determine if additional questions were needed.

Following this review, any necessary additions or modifications that were recommended by this reviewer were made to the research questionnaire before it was used in the pilot study. (The pilot study is described in a subsequent section of this chapter.)

The results of the pilot study with reference to the research instrument were analyzed and the necessary changes made in the instrument before it was used in the major segment of the research.

PILOT STUDY

Following the development of the research instrument to this stage, it was further refined in a pilot study. The pilot study had the following purposes:

To determine the face validity of the questions on the research instrument.

To determine if statements on the research questionnaire had content validity.

To determine if there were any questions that were ambiguous and that required clarification.

To determine if the proper sequence of questions had been employed.

To determine the amount of time required to complete the questionnaire.

For purposes of identification, Anastasi (1968) states: "Content validity involves essentially the systematic examination of the test content to determine whether it covers a representative sample of the behavior domain to be measured" (p. 100). Therefore, content must include both major objectives and factual knowledge. Conversely, face validity does not deal with what a question actually measures, but with what it appears superficially to measure. In other words, does the question look valid? Anastasi suggests face validity's concern is rapport and public relations (p. 104).

The subjects that were used in the pilot study to complete the research instrument were drawn from two discrete groups of individuals who were most familiar with the court reporting program. The first of these two groups were students who were enrolled in the two-year court reporting program at NAIT at the time of the pilot study. From the second-year students, four students were randomly selected to be participants in this refinement process. Four students from the first-year students were randomly selected to participate in the pilot study.

The second discrete group that made up the subjects of the pilot study included members of the instructional staff who teach court reporting at NAIT. From this group, two members were selected to participate in the pilot study. Approximately one-half the population from both groups were selected and involved in the pilot study. Data in Table 1 illustrates this selection.

These participants were selected to become involved in this phase of the study because of their knowledge of the court reporting program and because they were readily available to the researcher.

To conduct this phase of the research, the researcher contacted the pilot study participants to explain to them the purpose of the study, the research design, and the importance and significance of their role in the refinement of the research instrument.

The suggestions, criticisms, and additions received from the pilot study participants with regard to the research instrument were analyzed, and from the information obtained from this analysis, the research instrument was finalized prior to its use in the major investigation.

TABLE 1

PILOT STUDY PARTICIPANTS

GROUPS	NUMBER IN GROUP	PILOT STUDY
Students		
Year 1	10	4
Year 2	8	4
Instructors	3	2
TOTAL	21	10

METHODOLOGY

The methodology that was used to bring this study to its conclusion is presented in this section.

A review of the standard indices used to report the findings of educational research was conducted to determine if any research had been completed that was similar to the current study.

A computer search was made of the data base of the Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) using the 1978 edition of the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors. The 13 descriptors used in this information retrieval search were: Court Reporters, Language Ability, Reading Ability, Academic Ability, Music Activities, Athletics Activities, Adult Characteristics, Academic Aptitude, Student Characteristics, Cognitive Ability, Academic Education, English Education, and Auditory Perception.

The Education Index, Canadian Education Index, Current Index of Journals in Education, and the Canadian Periodical Index were also searched in an effort to uncover any journal articles written that might have a relationship to this study.

The results of the computer search of ERIC and the manual search of standard indexes for reporting the findings of educational research showed that there were no studies completed that dealt with the characteristics of court reporters.

From a review of the literature on the design of instruments normally used in educational research, it was decided by the researcher that a questionnaire would be used to collect data for this study. This literature review helped to identify the major advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire as a data collecting instrument. Both the advantages and disadvantages of the research questionnaire are discussed in an earlier section of this chapter.

To design the research questionnaire, the researcher worked very closely with the thesis supervisor who provided direction in the wording of statements, sequence of questions, and the preparation of the type of questions that would yield the necessary information for analysis. It was strongly recommended by the thesis supervisor that the approved draft of the questionnaire be placed in the hands of a specialist in instrument design in the Department of Education Psychology of the Faculty of Education, The University of Alberta. The thesis supervisor also recommended that the instrument be used in a pilot study before being used in the major investigation. A copy of the final draft of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A, page 117.

Two discrete groups of people who are knowledgeable about the court reporting program at NAIT were invited to become participants in the pilot study. These groups are described in detail in the Pilot Study section of this chapter. To involve these individuals in this phase of the research, permission was requested of the Division of Research and Academic Development, NAIT.

Permission was also requested of the Division of Research and Academic Development for the researcher to search the files of NAIT for the names and addresses of the 95 graduates of the court reporting program. Only those graduates, 62, who were working as court reporters in Alberta at the time of this study comprised the population of this investigation.

After securing the names and addresses of program graduates, the researcher prepared a covering letter that accompanied the questionnaire that was mailed to each participant. The purpose of that letter was to give an overview of the study, the role of the participants in the research, and to establish a deadline date for the return of the completed questionnaire. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was also included in which participants could return their completed instrument.

Of the 62 participants who were sent a research instrument, 55 returned completed instruments by the deadline date that was established. This represented a rate of return of 91%, which the researcher considered to be unsatisfactory.

Other researchers who have used a questionnaire to collect information have indicated a low rate of return. To increase the rate of return, these researchers used a follow-up letter. To prepare for this eventuality, the researcher prepared a follow-up letter. This letter and the initial correspondence to participants is found in Appendix B, page 125, of this study. The follow-up letter was mailed to the seven delinquent participants two weeks after the initial letter had been posted. A deadline date was also established in the follow-up letter for the return of the questionnaires that were included with the letter.

This follow-up procedure yielded an additional five completed instruments for analysis. The rate of return for both the initial letter and the follow-up letter was 60 completed questionnaires, or 97%.

Following receipt of the completed questionnaires, the information provided by each participant to each questionnaire statement was analyzed. These data were coded by the researcher and keypunched by personnel of the Division of Educational Research Services, Faculty of Education. The frequency program that was selected from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to generate frequencies and percentages. These frequencies and percentages were placed in tabular form for ease of presentation and interpretation.

From the data analysis of this study, those characteristics of court reporting personnel who have completed a two-year program in court reporting at a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution in Alberta which provided them with the basic entry skills so that they may become employed as freelance or official court reporters, were identified and placed into broad groups of classifications.

As a result of the data that were collected, findings, conclusions, observations, and recommendations were made to the senior administrators at NAIT and the National Shorthand Reporters Association. A recommendation was made for further research in this field.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The first chapter of this study includes an introduction to the research. It also includes: the problem statement; objectives of the study; significance of the study; limitations; operational definitions; identification of the population; instrumentation; a description of the pilot study; and methodology.

The second chapter presents an historical overview of court reporting. It also includes a review of related literature and the findings of related research studies that have a direct or tangential implication for this study.

The third chapter relates the data analysis of the study and the findings derived.

The fourth and final chapter summarizes the study, outlining the findings, observations, conclusions, and recommendations that were generated from the data collection and subsequent data analysis.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Chapter I of this thesis gave a detailed outline of the research and the methodology used to bring this study to its conclusion. Included in that chapter was the problem statement, the major and supporting objectives of the study, the significance of the study, limitations of the study, and operational definitions which were applicable to this research. Also included in the previous chapter was the population of the study and how that population was selected, and the instrument used in the study, a questionnaire, was fully described.

This chapter will be divided into the following major components: historical overview of court reporting; court reporting at NAIT; and the review of related research.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF COURT REPORTING

The lineage of the court reporter can be traced to antiquity. Court reporting is one of the oldest professions. The history of reporting is almost as old as recorded history. The Prophet Jeremiah of the Old Testament had a personal scribe by the name of Baruch (Jeremiah 32:12, New American Standard Bible, 1976, p. 770).

The profession of the scribe was considered to be an honourable one. In ancient times the skill of a scribe was responsible for linking the knowledge of one generation to that of another generation. In ancient Egypt, a young man had to be from nobility or the upper class in order to be accepted to a special school to become a scribe. Once graduated, he was considered to be a member of the educated official class (Kavett, 1976, p. 25). Kavett further emphasized that the duties of a scribe were considered to be so important that he did not have to pay taxes, but "he payeth tribute in writing" (p. 25).

The earliest shorthand system was invented by Marcus Tullius Tiro, a secretary to the Roman orator Cicero, about the year 50 B.C. (World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 17, 1970, p. 357). Verbatim reporting was used to record the deliberations of the Roman Senate, which were recorded on wax tablets by scribes. There are still many places today where many thousands of people do not write. For instance, in Istanbul, Turkey, scribes still work in public places. Scribes are still used to write scrolls in the Torah which are used in synagogues (World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 17, 1970, p. 190).

In the third century, the Emperor Severus decreed a shorthand writer who erred in reporting a court case should have the nerves of his fingers severed and be banished from Rome.

Many have read the questions put to Joan of Arc at her trial, and her answers. Many of Shakespeare's plays were saved for posterity because they were recorded by shorthand writers sitting in the audiences. It is known that Charles Dickens was a shorthand writer before becoming a famous author. As well, Woodrow Wilson drafted his state papers in shorthand.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF COURT REPORTING IN ALBERTA

Prior to 1905, Alberta was designated as part of the North-West Territories. In that year Alberta joined confederation and became a province. However, Alberta did not establish its own Rules of Court until 1914. Prior to that time, the judicial structure of Alberta continued to fall under the Judicature Act and Ordinances of the North-West Territories.

The Ordinances of the North-West Territories (1905) outlined the duties of a court reporter of that day:

> 287a Upon the application of any party to a cause or matter at or before the trial the judge may order that the evidence at the trial shall be taken in shorthand by some competent person to be named by the judge, and may give such directions as to the costs occasioned by the taking of the evidence in shorthand as to him may seem meet.
> (2) The stenographer taking the notes of evidence shall, as soon as possible, transcribe the same into longhand, and after having certified the correctness of the transcription shall deliver the same to the judge, who shall compare the same with his notes of evidence, and if the said transcription differs in any material respect from his notes of evidence correct the same to correspond with his said notes and thereupon certify the said transcription and deposit the same with the clerk, and the transcription when so certified by the stenographer and the judge shall be deemed to be the evidence (p. 274).

In 1905, there were three official court reporters with the judicial system in the Province of Alberta. The primary duties of these reporters were the reporting of trials and the performing of clerical and secretarial work for the judges (Funduk, 1976).

Court reporting in Alberta has evolved over the years to the point where today 109 people are employed as official court reporters by the Department of the Attorney General. In addition, there are three freelance firms in the province, two in Edmonton and one in Calgary, that employ a total of 24 freelance reporters. Official court reporters work as either Court of Queen's Bench reporters or Provincial reporters.

MACHINE SHORTHAND

A thorough review of the literature on the development of shorthand machines shows there is some discrepancy as to the year when the first shorthand machine was granted a patent in the United States. Clark (1979) in his article "Notes Toward History of the Shorthand Machine" states that in 1868 John Pratt was granted the first American patent for a shorthand machine. The patent number was 81,000. However, Miller et al. (1942) give the date of 1879 as the date of issue for the granting of a patent by the United States Patent Office to Miles Bartholomew for the first American shorthand machine. This machine was rather cumbersome and primitive because it required the operator to activate type bars and levers so that needles would pierce a continuous strip of paper approximately one-half inch wide (Miller et al., 1942, p. 1).

A few years later in 1882, Bartholomew improved his machine when he replaced the needles with a type bar and an inked ribbon, and also incorporated a system of five dashes to record information.

Miller et al. state that "In 1907, William J. Kehoe, of Washington, D.C., applied for a patent on a stenographic machine . . . which printed in addition to the five dashes, five dots" (p. 2). The machines from 1868 (79) to 1907 were all letter-at-a-stroke machines similar to a typewriter which assembles words by the letter-at-a-stroke process.

Near the turn of the century, George K. Anderson started to experiment with shorthand machines that were word-at-a-stroke machines (pp. 3-4).

In the 20-year period of time from 1890 until 1910, scarcely a year went by without the filing of one or more patents by inventors for the improvement of earlier machines. It was in 1888 that Arthur Bailey developed a machine that could write a syllable- or word-at-a-stroke where the symbols were written on a two-inch paper tape as they are today (p. 6).

The individual who made the greatest contribution to the development of the shorthand machine for commercial purposes was Ward S. Ireland. Ireland's machine had a keyboard arranged differently than its predecessors. His machine also had an attachment that snipped the role of paper into sheets to a predetermined size, marked these with a serial number and the operator's initials, and stacked them in a neat pile (pp. 7-9).

The work of Howard Smith in the development of a compact, portable shorthand machine should be acknowledged because he was the individual responsible for reducing the size and the weight of the shorthand machine, as well as simplifying the ribbon mechanism (p. 11).

Today 95% of the shorthand machine writers in the United States use either Stenotype or Stenograph models, which basically use Ireland's keyboard of 1911 (Miller et al., 1942, p. 12).

ELECTRIC SHORTHAND MACHINES

At the time of this study, electric shorthand machines have just come on the market. Advertisements in recent issues of the National Shorthand Reporter indicate that the electric shorthand machine is the invention of Michael A. Smith and Ben C. Fulkerson. Their machine is called Lektro-Graph, with patents pending. This machine is a conversion of existing stenographic machines. Stenograph is also advertising an electric machine called Steno-Lectric. In telephone conversation with the Stenograph representative in Vancouver, the researcher was advised that the difference between a standard shorthand machine and an electric one is analogous to the difference between a manual and an electric typewriter. If this analogy holds true, then some of the fatigue experienced by court reporters as they sit for hours at their shorthand machines will be eliminated in the future.

THE COMPUTER AND COURT REPORTING

Within the past six years, since 1974, the computer has been introduced into court reporting. The introduction of the computer and computer technology to assist in court reporting will have a tremendous influence on not only the role of the court reporter but on the responsibilities that these personnel perform.

In March, 1974, the first commercial computer-aided transcription system (CAT) was used by a freelance deposition firm in the United States.

Nelson (1979) in describing how this system works wrote:

> An electronically modified stenotype machine captures or records the data (stenotype notes) upon a cassette tape--producing in addition the paper notes, of course. This data is then transmitted by telephone to a location where a large computer is available for the translation of the stenotype outlines into English. The English data is transmitted back, again by telephone, to the location of the minicomputer, where it is stored on a disk for use with the printer and the "scope" (cathode ray tube, or CRT). The minicomputer is utilized for the proofreading and correcting process, commands to the printer, and ancillary functions.
>
> The large computer that accomplishes the translation of stenotype notes into English contains a large "dictionary" of stenotype outlines and their proper English counterparts. This dictionary may include most of the stenotype theories extant (p. 37).

As the use of CAT increases, many laborious hours spent by the court reporter dictating from machine shorthand notes into a dictaphone for transcription by a typist will be a thing of the past.

Verbatim reporting has been perfected to the point where today the reporter's skill is taken for granted, and the presence of the reporter is scarcely noticed in the courtroom or the meeting room.

COURT REPORTING AND THE NORTHERN ALBERTA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (NAIT)

The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology was established in 1962 as a result of the sharing funds of the Federal Government that were made available to the provinces under the 1960 Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act. NAIT is a polytechnical institute which is composed of four major programming units. These four units are: Business/Applied Arts; Technology; Industrial; and Continuing Education. The Continuing

Education Division provides a broad range of courses to meet the needs and interests of part-time learners. Many of the offerings are career related; some are intended to broaden or develop personal interests; still others provide leisure and recreational outlets.

In the organizational structure of the Alberta Department of Advanced Education and Manpower NAIT is a line operation of that Department with the President directly responsible to the Deputy Minister (Training Services Inventory, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, 1979, p. 7).

The Industrial Building of the Institute was completed in September, 1962, and the first class to be taught in that facility was for Communications Electrical Apprentices who were admitted on October 1, 1962. It was not until ten years later, in 1972, that the court reporting program became an integral part of the programs offered in the Business/Applied Arts programming unit.

In conversation with Barnett (1980) the researcher was advised that prior to the inception of the court reporting program at NAIT, court reporters in Alberta received their training in a number of ways. For years those who became reporters in Alberta were individuals who excelled in their manual shorthand classes in business colleges. Many of these individuals then spent long hours increasing their speed at the courthouse or any place they could find a public speaker. As well, some reporters were trained in either manual or machine shorthand writing on an apprenticeship basis at the courthouse by official court reporters. A few reporters attended court reporting schools in the United States where they learned to master the shorthand machine. However, these means were not supplying adequate numbers of court reporters to meet the demands of the judicial systems of Alberta.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM

Due to a chronic shortage of reporters in Alberta, in 1972 the Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association made a request that NAIT consider establishing a comprehensive program that would properly prepare students for a career in court reporting. The request that was submitted by the Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association also received the sanction of the Department of the Attorney General as well as that of the Alberta Law Society.

The Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association was incorporated as a society on July 5, 1977. However, discussions with Barnett (1980) revealed that the Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association existed unofficially since approximately 1950 when official court reporters from Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, and Lethbridge met together to form an education and social club. At that time, emphasis was placed on the social aspect; no negotiations were carried out with the government. However, approximately ten years later the Association was recognized as a vehicle between the official court reporters and the government.

The court reporting program at NAIT was thus established to relieve the shortage of qualified shorthand reporters and to prepare students for appointment as official court reporters within the Province of Alberta. Today, as well as being employed in Alberta, graduates of the program are employed in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, the Yukon, and the North West Territories. Graduates are employed as both official government reporters and private, freelance reporters. One graduate is a Hansard reporter in Ottawa.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

The calendar that is published by NAIT and that is made available to applicants who wish to apply for any of the programs offered is biennial. This is because the programs offered at this nonuniversity, postsecondary institution are primarily two-year programs.

The most recent calendar for the academic years 1979-81 provides a description of the court reporting program. This description includes general information directed at court reporting, the objective of the court reporting program, the approach, the graduate, and the program that a court reporting student is to follow. The two-year program is divided into six quarters with the student taking three quarters per academic year. During this period of time, the student learns about machine shorthand, judicial structure and criminal trial procedure, criminal law, English, expert testimony and civil trial procedure, medical terminology, commercial law, office procedure, and is required to complete a period of practical training.

Practical training begins after the student has successfully completed all other courses of the program. During practical training, the students must be able to conduct themselves professionally in a working environment and demonstrate the mastery of verbatim shorthand reporting. Students are assigned to the courthouse for a period of between four to six weeks, where under the direction of qualified court reporters the students actually take notes in court. Portions of the notes that are taken are then dictated and typed so that both of these court reporting skills can be evaluated. Written verification of the times and dates, hours and types of cases is provided by the qualified reporters responsible for the student's practical training, including, in addition, a written evaluation of the student's performance and conduct. These comments by qualified reporters, the student's proven skills, and the program head's judgment regarding overall performance, form the basis for the successful completion of practical training internship.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

The admission criteria for NAIT's court reporting program are found in the NAIT 1979-81 Calendar. According to this official document, these requirements are: "Grade XII English 30 or 33 with 60 percent or better, two other senior matriculation subjects and one other Grade XII subject. Typing 10 or better a definite asset" (p. 92).

The above admission criteria have been in place since the 1971-72 academic year when the program was added to those that were offered by the Vocational Department. The title of this department was subsequently changed to Applied Arts Department. Because the court reporting staff and students were dissatisfied with these admission criteria, a number of meetings were held between staff and senior administrators of the Institute to identify more realistic admission criteria. The result of these meetings was that new criteria for admission to the program were established. In correspondence with the Program Head of Court Reporting, the senior administrators of the Institute stated the new admission criteria to be: "Alberta High School Diploma or equivalent. Total of five Grade XII subjects made up of English (30 or 33) at 60%, two others at the 30 level, and two others at the Grade XII level. Overall average must be 60% with no mark lower than 50%. Certification of typewriting at 40 words per minute" (Personal Correspondence, 1979).

GRADUATION CRITERIA

In order to graduate and receive a Diploma of Applied Arts in Court

Reporting, students must receive a "Pass" mark in all courses that comprise the court reporting program. The graduate must be able to write machine shorthand at 180 words per minute for five minutes with 1% error rate. To achieve "Honours" in machine shorthand, the graduate must be able to write 200 words per minute for five minutes with 1% error rate. Student records show that the majority of the graduates achieve 200 words per minute.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

Table 2 includes data which show student statistics for the court reporting program at NAIT from September, 1972, to January, 1980. Data in this table show that over the seven-year period (1972-79) there was an intake of 182 students, 95 (52.2%) completed the program, 80 (43.4%) withdrew prior to completing the program, and the remaining seven were classified as non-graduates. A non-graduate is defined as a student who enrolled in the program, but did not withdraw or successfully complete the program.

NATIONAL SHORTHAND REPORTERS ASSOCIATION (NSRA)

The National Shorthand Reporters Association is a national professional organization that was founded in 1899 and has at the time of this study a membership of over 12,000 court and freelance shorthand reporters in the United States and Canada. This Association was founded to:

A. Secure the benefits resulting from organized effort.
B. Promote professional ethics.
C. Foster a scientific spirit in the profession.
D. Secure the maintenance of a proper standard of proficiency.
E. Promote and maintain proper laws relating to shorthand reporting.
F. Advance the interests of the shorthand reporting profession.
G. Enlighten the public as to the importance and value of

TABLE 2

COURT REPORTING STATISTICS NAIT

SHOWING INITIAL ENROLLMENT, GRADUATES, WITHDRAWALS & NON-GRADUATES

CLASS YEAR	ENROLLMENT	GRADUATES	WITHDRAWALS	NON-GRADUATES[1]
72-74	18	9	7	2
73-75	20	12	6	2
74-76	35	22	12	1
75-77	36	19	15	2
76-78	38	17	21	0
77-79	35	16	19	0
SUB-TOTAL	182	95	80	7
78-80[2]	23	-	15	-
79-81[2]	19	-	9	-
TOTAL	224		104	

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[1] Non-graduates are those people who enrolled in the program, but did not withdraw or successfully complete the program.

[2] 78-80 and 79-81 enrollment at the time of the study.

> the services performed by the competent shorthand reporter (BART General Requirements and Minimum Standards, no date given, p. 8).

To maintain high standards for court reporters and to assure that reporters who enter the profession have the basic competencies to maintain these standards, the Association has an approval program for schools that offer a program in court reporting. The intent of this program is to assist schools by establishing minimum standards that schools must maintain for their court reporting program.

THE BOARD ON APPROVED REPORTER TRAINING (BART)

Within the Association there is a Board on Approved Reporter Training (BART) which is a policy- and decision-making body. This seven-member board meets twice a year and "rules on the eligibility of schools applying for approval and determines the degree of their compliance with the minimum standards" (p. 9).

The minimum standards that an institution seeking approval must meet are listed in a two-part monograph of the Association which is titled General Requirements and Minimum Standards of the Board on Approved Reporter Training to Obtain NSRA Approval of a Court Reporter Training Program. The first section of this brochure lists the "General Requirements" that those schools applying for approval must meet. The second section of this publication lists the "Minimum Standards" that an approved school must fulfill in order to graduate court reporters.

In order for a court reporting program to be eligible for BART approval, the following requirements must be met:

> A. The institution, department, or program shall be primarily organized to train students for shorthand careers.
> B. The educational program shall be on the post-secondary or collegiate level.

C. Education shall be the principal activity of the institution.
D. The court reporting program of the institution shall be a residence program.
E. Each branch, extension center, or any off-main campus facility requires separate approval.
F. The court reporting program shall have been established for a period of at least two years with graduates from its program.
G. The institution shall be legally organized and authorized to conduct its program under the laws of its own state and community. Where state laws are silent, the institution shall conform to accepted organization and practices for comparable educational institutions.
H. The on-site visitation and evaluation of the institution must be specifically authorized by the chief executive officer of the institution.
I. The enrollment in the court reporting program must be adequate to support regularly scheduled and conducted classwork and to insure reasonable standards of instruction.
J. A current catalog meeting BART Standards must be in use (pp. 9-10).

APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Approval precedures of NSRA are normally conducted in three distinct phases. The first of these three phases is purely administrative and involves the institution interested in obtaining BART approval to complete the necessary application and to pay the prescribed application fee. During the second phase, an institution self-evaluation is made of the school's program as described on the evaluation forms that are sent out from the Association. These self-evaluators consider how well each school practice conforms to the philosophy and objectives and how appropriate the effectiveness of the school's efforts are to fulfill its purposes.

The third phase of the approval procedure is conducted by a team of external examiners who are appointed by NSRA to determine if the philosophy and goals of the school are being met through the school's instructional program, as well as to verify the institution's self-evaluation.

An on-site visit is made by a team of evaluators selected from a corps of evaluators comprised of registered professional reporters, administrators, and instructors from approved institutions. The on-site visit of this team is a highly professional undertaking. Members of the team observe, visit, and inquire for the purpose of getting as comprehensive a view of the work of the school and the program that is offered.

Following this phase of the approval procedure, the evaluation team submits its written report to NSRA where it is received by BART who determine if all the criteria for approval have been fulfilled.

Approval is granted on a quadrennial basis provided that the institution continues to comply with the minimum standards of the Association.

The court reporting program at NAIT is the only program of its kind in Canada to have BART approval.

At the time of this study, the Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association was working toward the right to approve court reporters in the Province of Alberta.

CHARACTERISTICS

Since the emphasis of this research is on the characteristics of court reporting personnel, it is essential to establish a clear definition for the term characteristic and what has been written on the subject by leading authorities.

A review of the professional literature on educational psychology and sociology shows that the majority of the authors who write textbooks in these two disciplines use the noun "character" instead of the adjectival form "characteristic" to describe the traits that an individual acquires at conception or through maturation.

The study of character has existed since antiquity. A pupil and successor to Aristotle, Theophrastus, was a pioneer of characterology, which is the study of character. Theophrastus' work was mainly concerned with "describing the various characters" of human beings (Roback, 1973, p. 9).

Adler (1927), a noted psychologist, when discussing the nature and origin of character, wrote:

> What we call a character trait is the appearance of some specific mode of expression on the part of an individual who is attempting to adjust himself to the world in which he lives. Character is a social concept. We can speak of a character trait only when we consider the relationship of an individual to his environment (p. 161).

Adler does not believe that characteristics are inherited, but that they are developed as a pattern of existence. Thus, characteristics are developed to maintain a particular life style.

Psychologist Allport (1961), in discussing characteristics, suggests: "All behavior and thought are characteristic of the person, . . . they are unique to him" (p. 29).

Allport recognized that many people use the terms character and personality synonymously. Allport defined personality as "the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behavior and thought" (p. 28). Character is the mark of man or his life style. European psychologists prefer the term character whereas North American psychologists most often use the term personality. North Americans stress outer movement or visible action while Europeans look to that which is inborn in man's nature and which is likely to be unchanging. However, character is more likely to be used when moral standards and values are referred to and personality when an individual's social effectiveness is discussed. Allport, therefore, prefers to define "character as personality evaluated; and personality . . . as character devaluated" (p. 32).

Allport emphatically differentiates the term characteristic from character and personality as "a bird of another feather" (p. 32). Allport discusses characteristic in these terms:

> It has no reference to moral judgment. Since it stands close to the original meaning of character we shall find it useful. It will serve to cover habits, traits, attitudes, and interests--any graven mark of individuality. It is a curious fact that "characteristic" should have kept its primitive meaning, whereas its root-form has gathered much ethical moss (p. 32).

In his book, The Nature of Conduct, Symonds (1930) summarized the definitions for character as well as personality that appeared in the professional literature until 1930. He summarized character under the following points:

> 1. Character has to do with those phases of man's behavior other than the intellectual.
> 2. Character is observed in the crystallization of definite traits.
> 3. Character represents an organization of behaviour.
> 4. Character is related to conduct. Some claim that character is a summation of conduct--others claim that conduct issues from character.
> 5. Character in a limited (and usual) sense refers to moral character, that is, one's behaviour relative to the conventions and standards of society.
> 6. Character is the result of an evaluation.
> 7. Character has to do with the outward expression of inner attitudes or dispositions. Gates says that this expression is focused on the face and may be read there by those with trained perception.
> 8. Character in a limited sense refers to socialization, self-seeking and social participation (p. 285).

Symonds, in summarizing personality, differentiated it from character with the following points:

> 1. Personality is much more inclusive than character.
> 2. Personality represents the organization of behaviour.
> 3. F. H. Allport would limit personality to reactions to social stimuli.
> 4. Personality is a devaluated description.
> 5. Personality refers to the dispositions or tendencies to action.

> 6. Personality represents a combination of habits and will.
> 7. There is a tendency to make personality refer to those reactions which are distinctive or unique.
> 8. Personality is popularly used in a sense not described in any of the above definitions. Personality is sometimes used to refer to a person's vigor, warmth, personal charm or attractiveness, as, "the actress had personality" (p. 286).

Symonds suggests that since character is more immediate than personality, it is of more vital concern to education.

COURT REPORTER

An official court reporter is a sworn officer of the Court. In addition to being able to write shorthand at high speeds, it is essential that a court reporter be an individual who is able to exercise discretion with respect to the confidential nature of the position. Court reporters should be courteous, tactful, understanding, and dignified in the performance of their duties.

It may be recalled from Chapter I that although Volume I of the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations (1971) does not list a definition for the occupational classification of a court reporter, it does list the duties and responsibilities that this person performs which are:

> Makes verbatim records of proceedings by shorthand writing or using shorthand-writing machine. Attends meetings, lectures, courts of law, parliamentary sittings and other proceedings, and makes verbatim records in rapid shorthand or using shorthand-writing machine. Reads portion of transcript during trial or other proceedings on request of judge or other official. Dictates shorthand notes to typist or into dictating machine or passes to stenographer for transcription. May perform typing duties. May attend a specific type of proceeding and be designated accordingly, Hansard Reporter (p. 172).

Volume I also discusses other data with regard to court reporting. General educational development (GED 3) is shown in Volume I for court reporting students to be the completion of high school or Grade 12. The specific vocational preparation (SVP 6) is shown to be "over 1 year and up to and including 2 years" (p. 1163). Environmental conditions (EC 1) are listed to be: "Protection from weather conditions but not necessarily from temperature changes. An occupation is considered "inside" if the workers spend approximatley 75 per cent or more of their time inside" (p. 1165). Physical activities (PA) as listed in the Dictionary include: Sedentary work (S), meaning that the lifting of 10 pounds is maximum and that a certain amount of walking and standing is necessary; reaching, handling, fingering, and/or feeling (4) whereby the use of one or both of the upper extremities is involved; talking (5), which involves the exchanging of ideas through the use of the spoken word; hearing (6) involving perceiving of the nature of sounds by the ear; seeing (7) involving the obtaining of impressions through the eyes.

The qualifications profile is found in Volume II of the Dictionary. It shows the basic aptitudes that are felt to be needed by a court reporting student. The aptitude levels shown in the qualifications profile are related to the converted scores obtained from the General Aptitude Test Battery and are illustrated on a standard curve on page XIV of Volume II.

Intelligence, meaning general learning ability and not IQ; verbal, meaning the ability to understand meanings of words and ideas associated with them; form perception, which includes the ability to perceive pertinent detail in objects; and clerical perception, which includes the ability to perceive pertinent detail in verbal or tabular material, require an average ability. Motor coordination, which is the ability to coordinate eyes and hands or fingers rapidly and accurately, and finger dexterity, which is the ability to move the fingers rapidly or accurately, require an above-average ability (pp. XII-XIII).

A Policy-Directive issued by the Alberta Attorney General in September, 1978, under the sub-heading Deportment, states:

> The deportment of all Reporters and Recorders in any proceeding to which they are assigned must be beyond reproach. The proper administration of justice depends upon the personal deportment of Reporters and Recorders during any proceeding which they attend. Reporters and Recorders are officers of the Court and as such, share in the responsibility to ensure that justice is not only done but appears to have been done as well as to ensure that our Courts are respected.
>
> All Reporters and Recorders shall observe the following:
>
> 1. A neat and appropriate appearance is expected. Reporters and Recorders will not be formally gowned. Thus, untidiness in dress will be pronounced and will detract from the image of the Court.
> 2. Punctuality will be observed.
> 3. Relationships with all parties in a proceeding will be maintained on a discrete and respectful basis and undue familiarity avoided (p. 4).

As well, the Alberta Rules of Court (1973) discuss the duties of an official court reporter. This discussion states:

> 724. An official court reporter appointed by order of the Attorney General is an officer of the court and shall perform such duties as may be required of him under the Rules or assigned to him by the Attorney General, and in addition to any other duties which he may be required by law to perform shall
> (a) attend on the court or the judges thereof when required and take down in shorthand a full and complete record of the proceedings before the court or judge thereof,
> (b) attend when required and take down in shorthand any oral examination under oath pursuant to the Rules,
> (c) keep in safe custody all shorthand notes of those proceedings or examinations taken by him, and
> (d) faithfully transcribe all shorthand notes of those proceedings or examinations and deliver a copy of the transcript whenever legally required to do so.
>
> 728. Whenever an official court reporter attends on and takes down in shorthand any oral examination under oath held pursuant to a Rule it is not necessary for the examiner, commissioner, clerk or deputy clerk, as the case may be, to be present at the examination, and an official court reporter so attending in the absence of the examiner, commissioner,

> clerk or deputy clerk, as the case may be, has power to perform the duties of the examiner, commissioner, clerk or deputy clerk, and in particular but not so as to restrict the generality of the foregoing has power to administer oaths, to take affidavits, to receive affirmations and to mark exhibits (pp. 313-314).

RELATED RESEARCH

It will be recalled that the researcher conducted an information retrieval search of the ERIC data base, as well as a manual search of the standard indices for reporting the findings of educational research. From these searches it was evident that no research on the characteristics of court reporting personnel had been completed. A master's thesis was completed by Gilsdorf at the University of Wisconsin which dealt with "Predicting the Success of Machine Shorthand Students as Related to a Career in the Field of Court Reporting." Only one article in the professional literature on court reporters was located that dealt with the characteristics of court reporters. That article was written by Kacen.

Benedict completed a master's thesis titled "Criteria for Predicting Shorthand Success." This thesis is tangentially related to this research since it dealt with shorthand.

A number of master's theses and doctoral dissertations have been completed at universities in the United States and Canada that dealt with learner characteristics. A review of these published works show that they are tangentially related to this research. The research investigations completed by Schindelka, Dusseault, and Stewart were completed to fulfill the requirements for the master's degree. The research investigations completed by Puffer, Jampolsky, and Fisher were completed to meet the requirements for the doctoral degree. A summary of each of these research investigations, which dealt with learner characteristics, will be presented in chronological order.

As previously stated, an ERIC search and a manual search of the standard research indices listed at the beginning of this chapter located only one study that has a definite relationship to the current study. This study was completed by Kacen in 1976 when he surveyed 21 of the 35 approved schools of court reporting of the National Shorthand Reporters Association. In this study Kacen was concerned with identifying criteria for success as a court reporter.

In this research the directors of approved schools provided Kacen with a list of criteria they felt were essential in order for an individual to have success as a court reporter. From the criteria that were received Kacen classified these criteria into a broad criterion statement. These nine criterion were as follows:

1. Good knowledge of English;
2. Persistence or drive;
3. High general intelligence;
4. Good manual dexterity;
5. Ability to work under pressure;
6. Maturity;
7. Courteous manner;
8. Previous work experience;
9. College degree (p. 8).

In addition, Kacen included a classification that he labelled a miscellaneous category. The miscellaneous category included:

> In a further, miscellaneous category, the directors suggested a prospective reporter should possess a willingness to please clients, typing skills, and an ability to adapt to different work situations (p. 8).

Kacen found in his survey that a little more than half the schools required those who applied to the court reporting program to take an entrance examination. He also found that a number of the schools employed as their entrance examination either institute-designed tests or standardized tests to evaluate the applicant's language as well as the applicant's thinking ability. Some of the standardized tests that participating institutions used were:

Otis-Lennon Mental Ability Test
Illinois Aptitude Test
Wonderlic
Iowa Reading Test (p. 8)

Kacen also discussed the use of shorthand machines by students in their training program. On this issue he wrote:

> As most shorthand reporters use stenographic machines, speed is determined by dexterity but is also dependent on their ability accurately to hear and understand every word said. For such understanding, an extensive vocabulary and a thorough knowledge of grammar are as essential as good hearing. Proper diction is also important, particularly for court reporters who often read back previously given testimony (p. 8).

Gilsdorf (1968) completed a study similar to the current study. Gilsdorf completed research toward her study to fulfill the requirements for a master's degree at the University of Wisconsin. The title of that study was "Predicting the Success of Machine Shorthand Students as Related to a Career in the Field of Court Reporting." This study was an attempt to determine if there were criteria that could be used to predict success for those attending postsecondary programs that would prepare the student for court and conference reporting. Gilsdorf became interested in this study because she taught machine shorthand at Kenosha Institute of Technology, Kenosha, Wisconsin, and because of the high dropout rate of students from the court reporting program. Only one-third of the students who enrolled in the program completed the two-year program.

The population for this study was taken from a public institution that was tuition-free (Kenosha Institute of Technology) and from Spencerian College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which is a private-tuition business college. From these institutions, both graduates and current students (1968) were used to make up the population of the Gilsdorf study. Because of the low number of graduates from each institution, Gilsdorf included those who graduated between 1963 and 1968 and the students who were enrolled in either institution during the 1968-69 academic year. The sub-population from Kenosha included 37 graduates and 16 students. The sub-population from Spencerian included 55 graduates and 34 students (pp. 8-13).

To determine the success of graduates, Gilsdorf selected the following factors:

1. Chronological age at the start of the course
2. Intelligence Quotient
3. High school grade point average
4. High school English grade
5. High school typewriting grade
6. Whether or not the student had previous shorthand instruction
7. High school shorthand grade
8. Previous knowledge of any foreign language
9. High school foreign language grade (p. 64).

The above factors were cross-referenced with the grades that the graduates and current students received as court reporting students. From that approach Gilsdorf found that there was a definite relationship between a high grade-point average in high school and the number of words per minute that a student in court reporting could write. Students with a "B" or better grade-point average could attain 200 words per minute at the end of their program. From this finding, Gilsdorf concluded that the high school grade-point average is a significant factor in predicting success. Gilsdorf found that age could not be used as a predictor of success, although no student above the age of 30 attained 200 words per minute writing two-voice testimony on the shorthand machine. Gilsdorf also found that intelligence quotients cannot be used to determine success of court reporting students. This researcher, however, found that no student with an intelligence quotient below 100 was able to achieve 200 words per minute on the shorthand machine.

The academic courses that were used to compute the high school grade-point average were: English, typewriting, shorthand, and a foreign language(s). These factors were also cross-referenced with the grades of court reporting graduates and current students. Of these four variables, Gilsdorf found that the grades attained in high school English can be considered as one of the best predictors of success for court reporting students. This researcher found that high school grades received in typewriting, shorthand, or foreign languages cannot be used to predict success for court reporting students.

From the findings of this research, Gilsdorf reached the following conclusion: It is difficult to predict success of students enrolled in a court reporting program of study (pp. 105-109).

In conducting the review of the literature for her study, Gilsdorf synthesized a number of qualifications that authors and writers said a successful court reporter should possess. These qualifications were:

> 1. Good judgment and discretion, since some proceedings in hearings, conferences, and law courts are confidential.
>
> 2. Complete impartiality and honesty in making the record.
>
> 3. Ability to work under pressure for extended periods of time and a liking for detailed work.
>
> 4. Self-reliance, for no matter how many people are present as he performs his duties, the reporter works alone. He must hear, he must write, he must prepare the transcript.
>
> 5. Alertness and ability to anticipate objections.
>
> 6. Promptness--It is preferable to arrive before the

> hour is set in order to obtain pertinent information, and to become familiar with the case, the names of those present, and such papers which may reveal the nature of the matter to be reported. (A record of all witnesses and exhibits must be kept).
>
> 7. Good diction facilitates comprehension when a reporter is required to read back his notes in court.
>
> 8. Good hearing is essential to understand speech impediments and foreign accents (pp. 30-31).

Benedict (1964) researched the "Criteria for Predicting Shorthand Success" for her master's thesis. Since court reporting requires a high level of skill in machine shorthand, this thesis was considered to be of significance to the current study.

Benedict wanted to determine predictors of success in Shorthand 10 and Shorthand 20. Grade IX Department examination marks and the School and College Ability Test scores of Grade X, Shorthand 10 students from seven Edmonton public high schools were used as variables with their final Shorthand 10 mark used as the criterion (pp. 9-11).

As a result of her research, Benedict found that Science 9, Language 9, SCAT Verbal, and Reading 9 to be the best predictors of success in Shorthand 10. Shorthand 10 and Lanaguage 10 were found to be the best predictors of success in Shorthand 20 (p. 47).

Benedict recommended more research be carried out to determine other variables that predict success in shorthand (p. 48).

Schindelka (1968) completed a master's thesis dealing with the "Characteristics of Students in the Alberta Institutes of Technology." This study examined the characteristics of full-time day students enrolled at the institutes of technology in Alberta in an effort to determine if these facilities were meeting their needs.

The student characteristics surveyed were: sex, age, last school grade completed, size of last high school attended, type of high school program taken and credits received, and the distance between permanent residence and the city where the institute was located. A cross tabulation computer program was used to analyze the data.

The results of the study disclosed the fact that technology students comprised the largest number of students enrolled at institutes of technology. The permanent address of one-quarter of this student body was found to be at least one hundred miles from the institute they attended or outside the province. Males made up the majority of the students surveyed. The age of most of these students ranged from 18 to 20 years. Many students had completed Grade 12 and most had taken a matriculation program in high school. As well, many students had a university entrance standing. More than half of the students had attended a high school with a student body of 400 or more (p. 68).

Schindelka recommended decentralization of services offered by vocational and trade programs. He also recommended financial assistance to those students having to travel long distances (p. 69).

Puffer (1971) completed a doctoral dissertation entitled "A Study of Student Characteristics at a Post-Secondary Institute of Technology." This study was conducted at the University of Illinois. The purposes of the study were to determine the important characteristics of technical students; to compare important characteristics of stayins and dropouts; to develop a method to study student characteristics which may be utilized in other institutes; and to prepare a predictive instrument for the identification of likely dropouts.

In this research Puffer emphasized the need for the conservation of human resources.

> There is a growing concern by the staff and administrators of educational institutions and by society in general over the wastage of human talent of those who prematurely with-

> drew from the educational system. It is believed that the early school leaver and the graduate who has no saleable skills face increasing difficulties in finding suitable occupational activity, and are often relegated to temporary, dead-end jobs (p. 1).

The 2,150 students enrolled in engineering, industrial, and business technologies at NAIT for the academic year 1969-70 comprised the population of Puffer's study. A stratified random sample of 138 freshman stayins, 168 seniors, and 106 freshman dropouts were selected. Emphasis was placed on the identification of dropouts at an early date. Data analyses included distribution statistics, frequency tabulation, chi-square analysis and correlation, analysis of variance, and discriminant analysis.

Puffer determined from this study that the withdrawal rate of the population of his study varied from "10 percent to 35 percent" (p. 130). Significant characteristics were determined when comparing stayins and dropouts. These characteristics related to family, high school background, community (rural-urban origins), and socio-economic status. A higher proportion of dropouts than stayins received encouragement from their parents. Students from rural communities persisted more in their studies than students from urban centers. Stayins received higher grades than dropouts in Grade 12 mathematics and social studies, as well as significantly better grades during their first quarter at NAIT. Stayins reported they would be more disappointed than dropouts if they failed to graduate. "There was no significant difference between dropouts and stayins as to age, marital status, type of living accommodations, or how they financed their education" (p. 133).

Puffer outlined a procedure for the study of technical student characteristics, emphasizing early identification of potential dropouts.

"Characteristics of College-Age Gifted" was the title of a master's thesis completed by Dusseault (1971). This study compared gifted college-age youth with average population groups. Background characteristics such as religion, sex, ethnic group, parent's schooling, and socio-economic status, as well as scholastic achievement and personality traits were the factors considered in this study.

The sample used by Dusseault consisted of 200 subjects randomly selected from all 1967 Edmonton Grade 12 students whose scores on the Co-operative School and College Ability Test (SCAT) were above the ninetieth percentile for the Alberta distribution.

Dusseault found no significant difference between the sample and population values with regard to sex, but there was a significant difference for all the other variables mentioned (p. 133). However, with respect to educational data, "all means for female subjects were considerably higher than corresponding population values; while means for male subjects were slightly lower on two achievement measures: first year and 1970 university grades" (p. 135).

Dusseault concluded that advantages associated with giftedness are directly related "to family characteristics: socio-economic status, education of parents, and possibly ethnic origin" (p. 135).

As a result of this study, Dusseault recommended further research should be designed to describe the gifted individual with accuracy. It must be determined if the phenomenon is restricted to the group studied or is more widespread.

Jampolsky (1972) completed a doctoral dissertation entitled "Some Characteristics of Slow Learners in a Special School."

A random sample of 60 students was selected from each of year one, year two, and year three students enrolled at W. P. Wagner High School during the 1970-71 academic year. The total number of the original sample who completed the test was 78 boys and 65 girls.

Jampolsky looked at characteristics as they relate to socio-economic status, self-concept, reading ability, English abilities, and science and mathematics abilities. Jampolsky was also concerned with personality and used the Junior Eysenck Personality Inventory which was designed to measure variables of neuroticism or emotionality and extraversion-introversion in children (p. 24). Many behavioral traits are inter-correlated so that they give rise to the above-mentioned dimensions. Jampolsky used the diagram in Figure 1 to illustrate these inter-correlated behavioral traits.

The results of the study determined that Wagner students represent a low socio-economic group. However, their intelligence range is higher than that established by slow learners, and they possess a wide range of intellectual ability, achievement, and personality dimensions. The students are primarily interested in vocational education programs. They have generally not experienced self-concept growth. The students had a high absenteeism as compared to students from other schools.

Jampolsky recommended a further investigation to determine if steps could be taken with regard to retention. Attendance and achievement are areas of concern. Wagner does not experience a great deal of success in student achievement and for many years has merely served a custodial function (pp. 85-87).

Stewart (1974) looked at "Student Characteristics and Academic Success in Selected Programs at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology" for a master's thesis.

Stewart was concerned with determining the characteristics of students enrolled in the first year of the two-year Business and Vocational Department programs offered at NAIT and with determining the

Unstable

Moody Touchy

Anxious Restless

Rigid Aggressive

Sober Excitable

Pessimistic Changeable

Reserved Impulsive

Unsociable Optimistic

Quiet Active

Introverted Extroverted

Passive Sociable

Careful Outgoing

Thoughtful Talkative

Peaceful Responsive

Controlled Easygoing

Reliable Lively

Even-tempered Careful

Calm Leadership

Stable

Figure 1 - Intercorrelated Behavioral Traits

(Jampolsky, (p. 25)

significance of independent student characteristic variables on student success. Success was determined by measuring weighted grade averages at the end of the third quarter of the first year (p. 2).

It was suggested by Stewart that recent cultural, scientific, and technological developments have created a renewed interest in the study of student characteristics since such studies first appear on the educational scene at approximately the beginning of World War II. According to Stewart, "A further impetus to the study of student characteristics has been the public demand for educators and their institutions to be accountable for use of public funds" (p. 2).

Demographic, high school, work background factors, aspirations and objectives, socio-economic status, and value orientation were the student characteristics gathered.

It was found that four-fifths of the students enrolled in business programs were male whereas all respondents in vocational programs were female. A large percentage of the students had attended large secondary schools and had taken academic high school programs acceptable for university entrance. The majority of students had not worked after leaving high school. If they did work, it was for a period of less than six months. A high percentage of students stated it was very important to them to complete their programs (pp. 124-127).

The small female enrollment in Business Department programs led Stewart to conclude insufficient effort had been made by high school or institute counsellors to advise females of occupation and wage opportunities for the graduates of business programs. Stewart suggested a further study to analyze the best student characteristic predictors of academic performance for specific programs offered by the Business and Vocational Department.

In 1977, Fisher completed a doctoral dissertation entitled "A Study of Student Characteristics, Attitudes, and Attrition from Secretarial Science Programs in Seven Selected Two-Year Post-Secondary Educational Institutes in Alberta."

Fisher was concerned with identifying student characteristics and attitudes, identifying the difference between students attending public colleges and other institutions, determining if there is an identifiable difference between secretarial dropouts and secretarial persister students, and determining the reason why secretarial science students withdraw from their program.

A total of 308 secretarial science students from seven institutions in Alberta made up the sample population. Fisher estimated the dropout rate from such programs to be "from 30 percent to well over 50 percent" (p. 2). Frequency counts, percentage distributions, chi square analysis, and discriminant function analysis were included in the statistical treatment.

Fisher concluded that Alberta secretarial science students share a high percentage of common personal characteristics and attitudes with their peers in Canada and the United States. Secretarial students are 95% female; three-quarters of them are single; and 80% are under the age of 25. As well, the majority are enrolled in one-year programs. Employment, transfer, and domestic reasons accounted for one-half of the attrition among the students (p. 153).

Fisher recommended faculty and administrative awareness of the reasons for attrition. He also suggested screening and placement testing for prospective students. Early identification of potential dropout students should be carried out in order to help eliminate the problems. Faculty advisers, student orientation, provision for individual differences, formalized withdrawal procedures, and continuous dropout research were recommended as well (pp. 154-157).

SUMMARY

This chapter gave a brief historical overview of court reporting from the time of the scribes of the Bible to the present day when machine shorthand is primarily used to record verbatim dialogue. This historical overview also included a recent technological innovation in court reporting--the use of the computer to transcribe the results of information recorded by machine shorthand.

The implementation and development of the court reporting program of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology was also discussed. The professional organization--National Shorthand Reporters Association for court reporters and The Board on Approved Reporter Training--and the approval process also make up part of the content of this chapter.

A number of research studies that had been completed in institutes in North America were reported in this chapter. All of these research investigations were concerned with learner characteristics and had a minor relationship to this study.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The previous chapter contained a review of the professional literature and research that was either directly or tangentially related to this study. This chapter presents the data that were collected with the research instrument that was mailed to the 62 court reporters who constituted the population of this study. These data are presented in tabulated form for ease of presentation and analysis.

It will be recalled from Chapter I that the research instrument, which was a questionnaire, was designed to collect three kinds of data: demographic, classification, nominal, and interval. To collect these data, the instrument was composed of the following six sections: Personal Information; Educational History - General; Extracurricular Activities; Work History; Leisure Time Activities; and Personal Opinions. In reporting the research data that were collected with the research questionnaire, this chapter will be divided into six sections that will coincide with the six sections of the questionnaire.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

In the Personal Information section of the research instrument there were six questions used to collect data which have been classified for the purpose of this study as demographic.

The first two questions in this section were designed to determine the number of female students who had a name change because their marital status changed since they completed the court reporting program of study. The data collected with these two questions, however, were not used in the study, but were used to cross-reference the records at NAIT and to update those records which warranted a name change. The researcher, because of the cooperative nature of the sharing of data, took the position that this procedure was not a violation of research ethics.

AGE

To determine the age of participants when they were enrolled as students in the court reporting program, the following question was asked:

The Question:

3. HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU ENTERED THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM AT NAIT?

Data collected with this question are shown in Table [illegible] These data indicated that 76.6% (46/60) of the participants were between the ages of 17 and 19 when they entered the court reporting program. Of this 76.7%, 45%, or 27 members of the research population, were 18 when they first became students in this program. Three individuals who were involved in the study were over the age of 22: one was 23; another was 27; and the other one was 37. Because of the extreme in ages of the 60 participants (17 to 37), there was a tendency that the upper extreme helped to raise the mean age for the population.

MARITAL STATUS

To determine the marital status of participants while they were students enrolled in the court reporting program, Question 4 was designed.

The Question:

4. WHAT WAS YOUR MARITAL STATUS AT THE TIME YOU ATTENDED THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM?

SINGLE
MARRIED
OTHER

TABLE 3

AGE OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS AS COURT REPORTING STUDENTS

N=60

AGE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
17	11	18.3	18.3
18	27	45.0	63.3
19	8	13.3	76.7
20	3	5.0	81.7
21	4	6.7	88.3
22	4	6.7	95.0
23	1	1.7	96.7
27	1	1.7	98.3
37	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

Data collected with this question were used in preparing Table 4. These data show that 55 of the 60 court reporters involved in the research indicated they were single at the time they entered the court reporting program. This represented 91.7% of the study population. Of the remaining five participants, four checked that they were married, and the remaining one checked "Other" and indicated a common-law relationship existed.

LANGUAGE

Question 5 on the research questionnaire was written to determine if English was the first language of those involved in the study. Since

TABLE 4

MARITAL STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS AS COURT REPORTING STUDENTS

N=60

MARITAL STATUS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Single	55	91.7	91.7
Married	4	6.7	98.3
Other Common-Law	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

TABLE 5

ENGLISH AS A FIRST LANGUAGE (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

ENGLISH	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Yes	58	96.7	96.7
No	2	3.3	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

the predominant language of the courts of Alberta is English, court reporters should be able to quickly decipher and comprehend the transactions of the courtroom with accuracy on their shorthand machines.

To respond to this question, students had to simply check either "Yes" or "No."

The Question:

5. IS ENGLISH YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE? ________ YES ________ NO

These data are presented in Table 5 and show that 96.7% (58/60) of the participants spoke English as their first language. The remaining two individuals indicated that they spoke another language as their first language.

It should be pointed out that because this question did not ask for participants to identify the first language they spoke, this could be considered a weakness of this question.

Question 6 was closely related to Question 5 in that it asked those participants who responded negatively to Question 5 to identify their age when they first learned to speak English.

The Question:

6. IF NO, AT WHAT AGE DID YOU LEARN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

0 - 5 YEARS ____________
6 - 10 YEARS ____________
11 - 15 YEARS ____________
16 - 20 YEARS ____________
OTHER (SPECIFY) ____________

The two court reporters who checked "No" that English was not their first language when they responded to Question 5 indicated that they had acquired their verbal skills to communicate in English before they were six years of age. These data are shown in Table 6.

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY - GENERAL

In the Educational History - General section of the research instrument questions were designed to collect both classification and interval data. Classification data were collected with Questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, and 24. Questions 21 and 25 of this section were used to collect interval data.

This section of the research instrument included 19 statements, 7 to 25 inclusive, which were concerned with the general educational history of those who participated in the study.

LOCATION OF HIGH SCHOOL

To determine the location of the high school that court reporting students attended prior to entering the program, Question 7 asked participants to check the location of their high school.

The Question:

7. THE HIGH SCHOOL THAT YOU ATTENDED WAS IN A:

CITY LOCATION ____________________
SUBURBAN LOCATION ____________________
RURAL LOCATION ____________________
OTHER (SPECIFY) ____________________

From data in Table 7, it is evident that more than half of the participants, 61.7% (37/60), completed their high school education in a city school. Of the 60 participants, 18, or 30.0%, graduated from high schools that were located in rural areas. The remaining participant checked "Other" and specified that the high school of graduation was located in a small town.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

There are four programs of study in the secondary schools of the province, from which a student may select one, depending on the

TABLE 6

AGE WHEN NO PARTICIPANTS LEARNED ENGLISH

N=2

AGE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
0 - 5 Years	2	100.0	100.0
6 - 10 Years	0	0.0	100.0
11 - 15 Years	0	0.0	100.0
16 - 20 Years	0	0.0	100.0
Other (Specify)	0	0.0	100.0
TOTALS	2	100.0	100.0

TABLE 7

LOCATION OF HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDED (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

LOCATION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
City Location	37	61.7	61.7
Suburban Location	4	6.7	68.3
Rural Location	18	30.0	98.3
Other Town Location	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

student's ultimate goal in life. The program of study selected by the student will provide that student with the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor skills that are the building blocks for either further education or for an "occupation" in the world of work. To determine the type of program which participants completed as high school students, Question 8 was written. To respond to this question, participants simply had to check one of the four choices listed.

The Question:

8. PLEASE IDENTIFY THE PROGRAM IN WHICH YOU WERE REGISTERED IN HIGH SCHOOL.

ACADEMIC ______________
BUSINESS ______________
VOCATIONAL ______________
GENERAL ______________

Data collected with this question are presented in Table 8. These data show that 95.0% (57/60) of the participants, as high school students, were enrolled in the academic program of study. Of the remaining three participants, two completed the business program and the remaining individual completed a general program.

LEVEL ATTAINED IN HIGH SCHOOL

To identify the number of participating court reporters who had successfully graduated from high school, the ninth question asked for these individuals to check the highest grade they completed in high school.

The Question:

9. WHAT WAS THE HIGHEST LEVEL YOU ATTAINED IN HIGH SCHOOL?

GRADE 10 __________
GRADE 11 __________
GRADE 12 __________
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE __________

Fifty-one of the 60 participants, or 85.0%, checked that they had

TABLE 8

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDY (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

PROGRAM OF STUDY	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Academic	57	95.0	95.0
Business	2	3.3	98.3
Vocational	0	0.0	0.0
General	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

TABLE 9

HIGHEST GRADE LEVEL IN HIGH SCHOOL (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

GRADE LEVEL	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Grade 10	0	0.0	0.0
Grade 11	3	5.0	5.0
Grade 12	6	10.0	15.0
High School Graduate	51	85.0	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

graduated from high school. Of the remaining nine people, six had taken Grade 12, and the other three had completed Grade 11.

GRADE 12 ACADEMIC AVERAGE

To determine the academic average that each participant achieved in Grade 12, Question 10 was prepared to obtain this information.

The Question:

10. IF APPLICABLE, WHAT WAS YOUR GRADE 12 ACADEMIC AVERAGE?

____

The data collected with this question are shown in Table 10. These data show that the Grade 12 academic average of the 56 participants who responded to this question ranked from a low of 58.0% to a high of 90.0%, with 8.9%, or five, of these individuals receiving an average in their high school subjects of less than 65.0%. Four members of the research population of practising court reporters did not answer this question. As will be recalled from Table 9, three participants achieved only Grade 11 in high school.

ENGLISH 30 OR 33 GRADE

Because the predominant language of the courts of Alberta is English and because one of the admission requirements for acceptance into the court reporting program is a grade of 60.0% in English 30 or 33, Question 11 was written.

The Question:

11. IF APPLICABLE, WHAT WAS YOUR GRADE IN ENGLISH 30 OR 33?

____

Table 11 includes the data that were collected with this question. It is rather evident from these data that, as high school students who

TABLE 10

GRADE 12 ACADEMIC AVERAGE (PARTICIPANTS)

N=56

ACADEMIC AVERAGE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
58	1	1.8	1.8
60	3	5.4	7.1
64	1	1.8	8.9
65	9	16.1	25.0
66	1	1.8	26.8
67	1	1.8	28.6
68	5	8.9	37.5
69	2	3.6	41.1
70	7	12.5	53.6
71	1	1.8	55.4
72	2	3.6	58.9
73	1	1.8	60.7
74	1	1.8	62.5
75	11	19.6	82.1
77	1	1.8	83.9
79	1	1.8	85.7
80	2	3.6	89.3
81	1	1.8	91.1
82	2	3.6	94.6
85	2	3.6	98.2
90	1	1.8	100.0
TOTALS	56	100.0	100.0

completed a course in English, the grades that 55 members of the research population received ranged from a low of 55.0% to a high of 93.0%. Eight of the 55 court reporters who elected to respond to this question indicated that their Grade 12 mark in English was 70.0%, with three members of the 55 receiving a grade less than the 60.0% in English. These three members represented only 5.0% of those court reporters who elected to answer this question.

NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED

Participants were asked in Question 12 to reply either "Yes" or "No" if, prior to entering the court reporting program, they had attended a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution. Specifically, Question 12 had the following wording:

The Question:

12. DID YOU ATTEND A NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION BEFORE YOU ENTERED THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM?

________ YES ________ NO

Data in Table 12 illustrate that all 60 participants who completed a research questionnaire responded to this question. Of these 60 individuals, eight checked "Yes" that they were enrolled in another nonuniversity, postsecondary institution prior to enrolling in the court reporting program of study.

Question 13 was closely related to Question 12 because it asked those who responded in the affirmative to Question 12 to identify the program in which they were enrolled in the previous institution.

The Question:

13. IF YES, PLEASE IDENTIFY THE PROGRAM IN WHICH YOU WERE REGISTERED.

____

TABLE 11

ENGLISH 30 OR 33 GRADE (PARTICIPANTS)

N=55

GRADE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
55	1	1.8	1.8
57	2	3.6	5.5
60	1	1.8	7.3
64	1	1.8	9.1
65	5	9.1	18.2
66	2	3.6	21.8
68	3	5.5	27.3
69	1	1.8	29.1
70	8	14.5	43.6
71	2	3.6	47.3
72	1	1.8	49.1
73	2	3.6	52.7
74	1	1.8	54.5
75	6	10.9	65.5
76	3	5.5	70.9
77	1	1.8	72.7
78	2	3.6	76.4
79	1	1.8	78.2
80	3	5.5	83.6
81	1	1.8	85.5
82	1	1.8	87.3
84	1	1.8	89.1
85	4	7.3	96.4
90	1	1.8	98.2
93	1	1.8	100.0
TOTALS	55	100.0	100.0

TABLE 12

NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

INSTITUTIONS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Yes	8	13.3	13.3
No	52	86.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

TABLE 13

NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS OF STUDY (PARTICIPANTS)

N=8

PROGRAMS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Secretarial Arts	5	62.5	62.5
Law Clerk	1	12.5	75.0
Therapeutic Recreation	1	12.5	87.5
Bible School	1	12.5	100.0
TOTALS	8	100.0	100.0

It is evident from data presented in Table 13 that the majority, 65.5% (5/8), were enrolled in a secretarial arts program. One participant was enrolled in a law clerk program and another in a therapeutic recreation program. One participant attended Bible school.

UNIVERSITIES ATTENDED

To identify the universities the participants attended prior to enrolling in the court reporting program, Question 14 was written.

The Question:

14. DID YOU ATTEND UNIVERSITY BEFORE YOU ENTERED THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM?

________ YES   ________ NO

In responding to this question, participants simply had to check either "Yes" or "No." Data in Table 14 show that only seven of the 60 practising court reporters involved in this study, or 11.1% of the research population, attended university before they entered the court reporting program.

Related to Question 14 was Question 15. It asked those who responded in the affirmative to Question 14 to identify the faculty in which they were enrolled at university.

The Question:

15. IF YES, PLEASE IDENTIFY THE FACULTY IN WHICH YOU WERE REGISTERED.

____

Data collected with this question were used in preparing Table 15. These data show that four of the seven participants, who responded "Yes" that they had attended university prior to entering the court reporting program at NAIT, indicated that they were enrolled in the Faculty of Arts. Two participants were enrolled in the Faculty of Education, and

TABLE 14

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Yes	7	11.1	11.1
No	53	88.9	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

TABLE 15

UNIVERSITY FACULTIES ATTENDED (PARTICIPANTS)

N=7

FACULTY	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Arts	4	57.1	57.1
Education	2	28.6	85.7
Home Economics	1	14.3	100.0
TOTALS	7	100.0	100.0

one participant of the research population was enrolled in the Faculty of Home Economics.

YEARS BETWEEN FORMAL SCHOOLING AND ENTRY INTO THE PROGRAM

To determine the number of years that had lapsed between the time members of the research population attended school and their admittance to the court reporting program, Question 16 was written. In responding to this question, participants had to place a check on the correct line. The Question:

16. HOW MANY YEARS WAS IT SINCE YOU LAST ATTENDED A FORMAL SCHOOL BEFORE YOU WERE ADMITTED TO THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM?

0 - 2 YEARS ____________________
3 - 5 YEARS ____________________
6 - 10 YEARS ____________________
11 - 15 YEARS ____________________
OTHER (SPECIFY) ____________________

Of the 60 practising court reporters who made up the research population, 58 responded to this question. Their responses were used in preparing Table 16. Data in this table show that 89.7% (52/60) of the participants were away from a formal school setting from 0 to 2 years before they entered the court reporting program to prepare for this occupation. The longest period of time that any of the participants were away from formal schooling was 17 years. One individual checked this response.

By cross-referencing data in Table 16 with data in Table 3, it is evident that the participant who was 37 years of age had been out of school the longest period of time before enrolling in the court reporting program.

BACKGROUND IN SHORTHAND OF PARTICIPANTS

Data from Table 8 show that 95.0% of the research population as high school students were enrolled in the academic program. To determine if members involved in this study could write shorthand other than machine shorthand, Question 17 was designed.

The Question:

17. DO YOU WRITE ANOTHER SHORTHAND SYSTEM OTHER THAN MACHINE SHORTHAND?

______ YES ______ NO

All participants had to do to respond to this question was to check either "Yes" or "No." It is evident from the number of participants who checked "No," 63.3% (38/60), that a significant proportion of the research population do not possess the skills or knowledge to write another shorthand system. The remaining 22 individuals involved in the research indicated by checking "Yes" that they could write another shorthand system in addition to machine shorthand. The 22 participants who indicated that they could write another shorthand system then had to respond to the next four questions (Questions 18, 19, 20, and 21) of the research instrument.

To identify the shorthand systems of the 22 participants who said "Yes" to Question 17, indicating they could write another shorthand system, Question 18 was prepared. The participants were asked to select from a list of shorthand systems the one that they could write. Space was left under "Other" for these individuals to include any additional system that did not appear on the list.

The Question:

18. IF YES, PLEASE IDENTIFY:

PITMAN TRADITIONAL ______________
PITMAN SHORTERHAND ______________
GREGG ______________
FORKNER ______________
TAKE 30 ______________
OTHER (SPECIFY) ______________

TABLE 16

OUT OF SCHOOL YEARS (PARTICIPANTS) PRIOR TO ADMISSION TO PROGRAM

N=58

YEARS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
0 - 2 Years	52	89.7	89.7
3 - 5 Years	4	6.9	96.6
6 - 10 Years	0	0.0	96.6
11 - 15 Years	1	1.7	98.3
Other 17 Years	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	58	100.0	100.0

TABLE 17

NUMBER (PARTICIPANTS) WHO WRITE ANOTHER SHORTHAND SYSTEM

N=60

SHORTHAND* SYSTEM	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Yes	22	36.7	36.7
No	38	63.3	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

*High School Shorthand System

The shorthand systems studied by the 22 participants were used in preparing Table 18. It is evident from the data in this table that half (11/22) of those who said they could write another shorthand system can write Pitman Traditional shorthand. Five of the 22 participants writing another shorthand system write Pitman Shorterhand, whereas one writes Gregg and another writes Forkner. None of the participants indicated they write Take 30. The two participants responding under "Other" indicated they write Speedwriting.

To determine if participants completed shorthand at the 10 (Grade 10), 20 (Grade 11), or 30 (Grade 12) level, Question 19 was included on the research questionnaire.

The Question:

19. IF YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION 17 WAS YES, WHAT LEVEL DID YOU COMPLETE IN THE SHORTHAND SYSTEM YOU STUDIED?

SHORTHAND 10 ____________
SHORTHAND 20 ____________
SHORTHAND 30 ____________
OTHER (SPECIFY) ____________

Data collected with this question were used to organize Table 19. One participant who answered "Yes" to Question 17 did not respond to Question 19. These data show that 23.8% (5/21) of those participants who took shorthand as a high school course successfully completed Shorthand 10 (Grade 10). One of these individuals completed Shorthand 20 (Grade 11). However, 14 of these individuals, or 66.7%, completed Shorthand 30 (Grade 12). A manual analysis of the 60 returned research instruments showed that in the "Other" category one participant of the 21 indicated that she had successfully completed Shorthand 31 while a Grade 12 student.

Question 20 was related to the previous three questions because it was prepared to determine the number of words per minute that partici-

TABLE 18

SHORTHAND SYSTEMS (PARTICIPANTS) COULD WRITE

N=22

SHORTHAND SYSTEMS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Pitman Traditional	11	50.0	50.0
Pitman Shorterhand	5	22.7	72.7
Gregg	1	4.6	77.3
Forkner	3	13.6	90.9
Take 30	0	0.0	90.9
Other Speedwriting	2	9.1	100.0
TOTALS	22	100.0	100.0

TABLE 19

GRADE LEVEL IN SHORTHAND ACHIEVED (PARTICIPANTS)

N=21

GRADE LEVEL	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Shorthand 10	5	23.8	23.8
Shorthand 20	1	4.8	28.6
Shorthand 30	14	66.7	95.2
Other Shorthand 31	1	4.8	100.0
TOTALS	21	100.0	100.0

pants could write using the shorthand system they identified in Question 18.

The Question:

20. IF YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION 17 WAS YES, HOW MANY WORDS PER MINUTE DID YOU ATTAIN IN THE SHORTHAND SYSTEM YOU STUDIED?

____

Of the 22 participants who responded to the question directed toward shorthand, only 20 of these individuals listed the speed they had attained in writing that shorthand. Indicated in Table 20 are the words per minute for these 20 participants. These data show the words per minute ranged from 80 to 140. Of the 20 members of the research population who gave their speed, 45.0% (9/20) said they could take shorthand at a speed of 120 words per minute. At the low extreme of the range of 80 to 140 words per minute were five individuals, and at the upper extreme of 140 words per minute was one participant.

To determine the shorthand background that court reporters involved in this study had as high school students, five questions were included on the research instrument to collect that type of information. Question 21 was the last of these questions. This particular question used a five-point Likert scale to determine the perceptions that participants had of their success in acquiring skills in the three learning domains in order to learn to write shorthand in high school.

The Question:

21. AS A STUDENT OF SHORTHAND, HOW DID YOU PERCEIVE YOURSELF? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1	2	3	4	5
SLOW		AVERAGE		QUICK

Data collected with this question were used to assemble Table 21. It is evident from these data that this question was poorly written

TABLE 20

SHORTHAND WORDS PER MINUTE AS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (PARTICIPANTS)

N=20

WORDS PER MINUTE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
80	5	25.0	25.0
90	3	15.0	40.0
100	2	10.0	50.0
120	9	45.0	95.0
140	1	5.0	100.0
TOTALS	20	100.0	100.0

TABLE 21

PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION AS HIGH SCHOOL SHORTHAND STUDENTS

N=55

PERCEPTION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Slow	1	1.8	1.8
Below Average	6	10.9	12.7
Average	13	23.6	36.4
Above Average	23	41.8	78.2
Quick	12	21.8	100.0
TOTALS	55	100.0	100.0

because of the number of court reporters who provided a response (55/60), when only 20, 21, or 22 participants answered the other questions related to shorthand. In retrospect, this question should have been written so that the phrase "in high school" was added after the word "shorthand."

However, in answer to the question, 63.6% (35/55) of the participants perceived themselves to be "Above Average" or "Quick" as shorthand students.

BACKGROUND IN TYPEWRITING OF PARTICIPANTS

The last four questions in the section on Educational History - General were written to determine the kinds of experiences participants had with typewriting as high school students.

Question 22 was the first question in the series of four questions on typewriting. To respond to this question, the respondent simply had to check either "Yes" or "No."

The Question:

22. DID YOU TAKE A COURSE IN TYPEWRITING IN HIGH SCHOOL?

_____ YES _____ NO

In Table 22 are data that were collected with this question. It is evident from these data that 95.0% (57/60) of the participants had taken a course in typewriting as high school students. Only 5.0%, or three participants, did not have such a course.

Question 23 was prepared to determine whether or not those in-involved in the study completed Typewriting 10 (Grade 10), Typewriting 20 (Grade 11), or Typewriting 30 (Grade 12).

TABLE 22

NUMBER (PARTICIPANTS) WHO STUDIED HIGH SCHOOL TYPEWRITING

N=60

HIGH SCHOOL TYPEWRITING	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Yes	57	95.0	95.0
No	3	5.0	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

TABLE 23

GRADE LEVEL IN TYPEWRITING ACHIEVED (PARTICIPANTS)

N=57

GRADE LEVEL	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Typewriting 10	9	15.8	15.8
Typewriting 20	13	22.8	38.6
Typewriting 30	35	61.4	100.0
Other	0	0.0	100.0
TOTALS	57	100.0	100.0

The Question:

23. IF YES, WHAT LEVEL OF TYPEWRITING DID YOU COMPLETE?

TYPEWRITING 10 ________________
TYPEWRITING 20 ________________
TYPEWRITING 30 ________________
OTHER (SPECIFY) ________________

The data collected with this question were used in preparing Table 23. These data show that 61.4% (35/57) of the participants had completed Typewriting 30 (Grade 12). Thirteen of the responding court reporters completed Typewriting 20 (Grade 11), and nine completed Typewriting 10 (Grade 10) in high school.

Participants who responded "Yes" that they had completed a course in typewriting in high school were asked in Question 24 to list the words per minute they attained.

The Question:

24. IF YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION 22 WAS YES, HOW MANY WORDS PER MINUTE DID YOU ATTAIN IN TYPEWRITING?

____

Of the 57 court reporters who were members of the research population, 56 provided information requested in the above question. Data in Table 24 show the range of words per minute that the 56 respondents achieved in their typewriting course as high school students. This range was from a low of 25 words per minute to a high of 101 words per minute. Fourteen of the 56 participants indicated that after completing their high school course they could type at 60 words per minute. There were 41.0% (23/56) of the research participants who could type 62 words per minute or more.

Participants were asked to give their perceptions of themselves as a student of typewriting by placing a check on a continuum from

TABLE 24

TYPEWRITING WORDS PER MINUTE AS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

N=56

WORDS PER MINUTE	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
25	1	1.8	1.8
30	1	1.8	3.6
35	1	1.8	5.4
40	2	3.6	8.9
45	6	10.7	19.6
50	3	5.4	25.0
54	1	1.8	26.8
55	3	5.4	32.1
57	1	1.8	33.9
60	14	25.0	58.9
62	2	3.6	62.5
63	1	1.8	64.3
65	3	5.4	69.6
70	5	8.9	78.6
72	1	1.8	80.4
75	3	5.4	85.7
80	2	3.6	89.3
85	4	7.1	96.4
100	1	1.8	98.2
101	1	1.8	100.0
TOTALS	56	100.0	100.0

"Slow" to "Quick" to indicate how they felt they acquired the necessary psychomotor skills needed to become proficient as a typist.

The Question:

25. AS A STUDENT OF TYPEWRITING, HOW DID YOU PERCEIVE YOURSELF? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1	2	3	4	5
SLOW		AVERAGE		QUICK

Fifty-nine of the 60 participants provided information to this question. Two additional participants responded to this question because they studied typewriting after high school and before entry into the court reporting program. Of the 59 individuals who answered this question, 16 checked on the five-point scale that they were "Quick" to learn their typewriting skills. Nineteen checked (4) on the scale which indicated that they perceived themselves as "Above Average" in learning typewriting skills, and a similar number, 19, by checking (3) on the scale, rated themselves as "Average."

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The three questions in the Extracurricular Activities section of the research instrument were written to identify the extracurricular activities in which the participants were involved while in high school. Two of these questions (Questions 26 and 28) were used to collect nominal data. Interval data were collected with Question 27.

MUSICAL BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPANTS

Because the skills involved in playing a musical instrument require a high degree of concentration, interest, and the use of both hands (abilities that are also required to learn machine shorthand), Question 26 was written to identify the musical instruments that

TABLE 25

PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION AS HIGH SCHOOL TYPEWRITING STUDENTS

N=59

PERCEPTION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Slow	2	3.4	3.4
Below Average	3	5.1	8.5
Average	19	32.2	40.7
Above Average	19	32.2	72.9
Quick	16	27.1	100.0
TOTALS	59	100.0	100.0

participants played before they enrolled in the court reporting program.

The Question:

26. NAME ANY MUSICAL INSTRUMENT THAT YOU PLAY: ____________________

The data collected with this question are shown in Table 26. These data show that only 40 of the 60 participants provided information to this question and listed the musical instrument they played. It is evident that these 40 people played a variety of musical instruments and that 72.5% (29/40) played the piano. These data also show that some of the participants played more than one musical instrument.

In Question 27 a five-point Likert scale with ratings from "Slow" to "Quick" was used to determine how participants perceived themselves as music students in learning the skills needed to play some type of a musical instrument. In responding to this question participants were asked to place a check mark in the appropriate location on the continuum.

TABLE 26

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS PLAYED (PARTICIPANTS)

N=40

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%
Guitar	5	12.5
Piano	29	72.5
Violin	3	7.5
Organ	5	12.5
Drum	2	5.0
Clarinet	2	5.0
Flute	2	5.0
Percussion	1	2.5
Accordian	3	7.5
Oboe	1	2.5
Saxaphone	1	2.5
French Horn	1	2.5
Fife	1	2.5
TOTALS	56*	

*The total number of participants is greater than 40 because some participants played more than one musical instrument.

The Question:

27. AS A STUDENT OF MUSIC, HOW DID YOU PERCEIVE YOURSELF? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

N/A ____ 1 2 3 4 5
SLOW AVERAGE QUICK

All 40 participants who indicated they could play a musical instrument replied to this question. Data gathered from this question were used to prepare Table 27. These data indicate that 35, or 87.5%, of the 40 court reporters who could play a musical instrument rated themselves "Average and Above" in their ability to acquire the skills needed to play the instrument(s) of their choice. Of these 35 participants, four perceived themselves as "Quick" to learn the skills required to play a musical instrument; 17 indicated "Above Average;" and 14 "Average." Five of these 35 individuals perceived themselves as "Below Average" in skill acquisition associated with their ability to play an instrument.

HIGH SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

To determine the extracurricular activities in which participants of this study were involved in during their high school days, Question 28 was included in the research questionnaire.

The Question:

28. IN HIGH SCHOOL WHAT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES WERE YOU INVOLVED IN? (CHECK THOSE THAT APPLY)

MUSIC __________
DRAMA __________
SPORTS __________
CHEERLEADING __________
SCHOOL PAPER __________
SCHOOL RADIO __________
PHOTOGRAPHY __________
OTHER (SPECIFY) __________

Data collected with this question were used in preparing Table 28. These data show that 75.0% (45/60) of the participants of this study were involved in some type of extracurricular activity when they were in high school. Two individuals participated in six activities, and 18 individuals participated in one activity. Because of the number and

TABLE 27

PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION AS MUSIC STUDENTS

N=40

PERCEPTION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Slow	0	0.0	0.0
Below Average	5	12.5	12.5
Average	14	35.0	47.5
Above Average	17	42.5	90.0
Quick	4	10.0	100.0
TOTALS	40	100.0	100.0

TABLE 28

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

NO. OF ACTIVITIES	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
0	15	25.0	25.0
1	18	30.0	55.0
2	15	25.0	80.0
3	5	8.3	88.3
4	4	6.7	95.0
5	1	1.7	96.7
6	2	3.3	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

variety of the extracurricular activities listed, the data indicate that as high school students the participants of this study could be considered to be involved in other than classroom activities.

WORK HISTORY

In the Work History section of the research questionnaire six questions were asked to collect ordinal data regarding the participating court reporters' employment background.

HEAVIEST EMPLOYMENT COMMITMENT

In order to determine the heaviest employment commitment of participants prior to their entry into the court reporting program, Question 29 was designed. In responding to this question, participants had to place a check next to the correct response.

The Question:

29. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR HEAVIEST EMPLOYMENT COMMITMENT PRIOR TO ENROLLING IN THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM?

NEVER EMPLOYED ______________
EMPLOYED PART-TIME ______________
EMPLOYED FULL-TIME ______________

All 60 practising court reporters who constituted the research population provided an answer to this question. Data derived from this question were used to prepare Table 29. These data show that 56.7% (34/60) participants were employed part-time, and 41.7% (26/60) participants were employed full-time prior to entry into the court reporting program. Only one person of the 60 participants of the study indicated that they had not been employed either part-time or full-time.

LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

Question 30 was asked to determine the length of time that participating court reporters were employed in their jobs before entering

TABLE 29

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY PRIOR TO ENTRY INTO PROGRAM (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

EMPLOYMENT	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Never Employed	1	1.7	1.7
Employed Part-Time	34	56.7	58.3
Employed Full-Time	25	41.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

the court reporting program.

The Question:

30. FOR HOW LONG A PERIOD WERE YOU EMPLOYED? ______________

The data collected from this question were used in formulating Table 30. These data show that of the 58 participants who answered this question, 77.6% (45/58) could be considered as having rather short-term employment because they worked for 24 months or less. Data in this table also show a range for the number of months that participants were employed before they entered NAIT to prepare to become court reporters. This range shows that seven participants were employed for two months while one participant was employed for 132 months.

In cross-referencing data in Table 30 with data from Table 3 it is evident that the participant who had the longest employment history was the individual who was 37 years old when she entered the court reporting program.

TABLE 30

MONTHS EMPLOYMENT (PARTICIPANTS) PRIOR TO ENTRY INTO PROGRAM

N=58

MONTHS (EMPLOYMENT)	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
2	7	12.1	12.1
3	9	15.5	27.6
4	2	3.4	31.0
5	1	1.7	32.8
6	3	5.2	37.9
7	1	1.7	39.7
8	4	6.9	46.6
9	1	1.7	48.3
12	3	5.2	53.4
18	1	1.7	55.2
24	13	22.4	77.6
27	1	1.7	79.3
36	6	10.3	89.7
48	2	3.4	93.1
52	1	1.7	94.8
60	2	3.4	98.3
132	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	58	100.0	100.0

OCCUPATIONS PARTICIPANTS EMPLOYED IN

Question 31 was developed to determine the kinds of employment the participating court reporters engaged in prior to their entry into the court reporting program.

The Question:

31. AT WHAT OCCUPATION WERE YOU EMPLOYED? ________________

TABLE 31

OCCUPATIONS (PARTICIPANTS)

N=59

OCCUPATIONS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Bank Clerk	2	3.4	3.4
Clerk-Receptionist	6	10.2	13.6
Store Clerk	9	15.3	28.8
Clerk Typist	6	10.2	39.0
Secretary	15	25.4	64.4
Comptometer Typist	1	1.7	66.1
Hospital Porter	1	1.7	67.8
Bank Teller	1	1.7	69.5
Telephone Operator	1	1.7	71.2
Research Assistant	1	1.7	72.9
Waitress	4	6.8	79.7
Dicta-Typist	1	1.7	81.4
Militia	1	1.7	83.1
Service Station Attendant	1	1.7	84.7
Swimming Pool Instructor	2	3.4	88.1
Operator Trainee	1	1.7	89.8
Nursing Home Worker	1	1.7	91.5
Cashier	3	5.1	96.6
Labourer	1	1.7	98.3
Kitchen Aide	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	59	100.0	100.0

Data gathered from Question 31 were used to develop Table 31. All 59 participating court reporters who previously indicated in Question 29 that they had been employed, answered this question. These 59 individuals were engaged in a total of 20 different occupations. Fifteen individuals, or 25.5%, were employed as secretaries. This occupation was the most prevalent of the 20 engaged in by the participants.

USE OF TYPEWRITING IN EMPLOYMENT

To determine whether or not those involved in the study made use of their typewriting skills while they were employed, Question 32 was prepared to elicit this type of information.

The Question:

32. DID YOU USE TYPEWRITING IN YOUR EMPLOYMENT? ________ YES ________ NO

To respond to this question, all participants had to do was check "Yes" or "No." Data collected from this question were used to prepare Table 32. These data indicate that 59 of the 60 court reporters involved in the study responded to this question. Of these 59 individuals, 32, or 54.2%, indicated that while they were employed they made use of their typewriting skills in their work. The remaining 27 participants checked "No" that their work did not require that they make use of their typewriting skills.

EMPLOYMENT WHILE ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM

A program of study for court reporters is not only demanding of the student in terms of in-class time but also in terms of out-of-class time. Out-of-class time can be used by students to practise learning the keyboard of the shorthand machine as well as developing finger dexterity in order to become proficient with this machine.

TABLE 32

USE OF TYPEWRITING WHILE EMPLOYED (PARTICIPANTS)

N=59

EMPLOYMENT (TYPEWRITING)	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Yes	32	54.2	54.2
No	27	45.8	100.0
TOTALS	59	100.0	100.0

TABLE 33

EMPLOYMENT WHILE ENROLLED IN PROGRAM (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

EMPLOYED	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Yes	18	30.0	30.0
No	42	70.0	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

To determine if, as students in the court reporting program, participants were employed on a part-time basis, Question 33 was developed.

The Question:

33. WHILE IN THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM WERE YOU ALSO EMPLOYED?

________ YES ________ NO

To respond to this question, participants could check either "Yes" or "No." Data collected with this question show that only 30.0% (18/60) of those involved in the study had part-time employment while they attended NAIT to become court reporters. It would be an interesting analysis to cross-reference this data with the students' academic records at NAIT to determine if part-time employment had either a positive or a negative effect on the students' performance. Since this was not done, this could be considered another weakness of this study.

Question 34 was related to Question 33 since it asked those who responded in the affirmative to Question 33 to indicate what effect their employment may have had on their performance in school. To secure this information, Question 34 had this wording:

The Question:

34. IF YOU WERE EMPLOYED WHILE IN THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM, WHAT EFFECT DID THIS HAVE ON YOUR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE?

NO EFFECT __________
POSITIVE EFFECT __________
NEGATIVE EFFECT __________

Data in Table 33 show that 18 participants indicated that they had some form of part-time employment while they were court reporting students. In Table 34 are data which show that 11 of the 18 participants, or 64.7%, were of the opinion that their work on a part-time basis did not have any effect on their performance as a student. However, 35.3% (6/18) of the court reporting students who held part-time work were of the opinion that their work had a negative effect on their performance as court reporting students.

LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

The Leisure Time Activities section of the research instrument included five questions that dealt with the sports and reading habits of the participants of this study while they were in high school. Many of the leisure time activities are similar to learning to play a musical instrument because these activities require a certain degree of concentration, interest, and dexterity on the part of those involved.

Of the five questions that comprised this section, two (Questions 35 and 38) were used to collect nominal data, and the remaining three (Questions 36, 37, and 39) were used to collect interval data.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Question 35 was designed to establish the sports in which the participating court reporters in this study engaged in as high school students. In responding to this question, participants had to place a check on the appropriate line(s).

The Question:

35. WHAT SPORT(S) DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL?
(CHECK THOSE THAT APPLY)

SKIING ________________
GOLFING ________________
TENNIS ________________
RACQUETBALL ________________
CURLING ________________
BASEBALL ________________
HOCKEY ________________
OTHER (SPECIFY) ________________

Data derived with this question are found in Table 35. These data indicate that only five, or 8.3%, of the 60 participants did not take part in any sports activities as high school students. Because participants were asked to identify sport(s), one participant indicated that she had been active in nine sports as a high school student; two participants were active in eight sports; one participant was active in seven sports; four participants were active in six sports; five participants were active in five sports; seven participants were

TABLE 34

EFFECT EMPLOYMENT HAD ON PERFORMANCE WHILE A STUDENT

N=17

EFFECT	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
No Effect	11	64.7	64.7
Positive Effect	0	0.0	0.0
Negative Effect	6	35.3	100.0
TOTALS	17	71.7	100.0

TABLE 35

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS INVOLVEMENT (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

NO. OF SPORTS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
0	5	8.3	8.3
1	12	20.0	28.3
2	14	23.3	51.7
3	9	15.0	66.7
4	7	11.7	78.3
5	5	8.3	86.7
6	4	6.7	93.3
7	1	1.7	95.0
8	2	3.3	98.3
9	1	1.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

active in four sports; nine participants were active in three sports; 14 participants were active in two sports; and 18 participants were active in one sport.

Both Question 36 and Question 35 were closely related because they dealt with sports. Question 36 asked for participants to provide interval data by checking on a five-point Likert scale their perception of themselves as a participant in a sports activity.

The Question:

36. AS A SPORTS PARTICIPATOR, HOW DID YOU PERCEIVE YOURSELF? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1	2	3	4	5
SLOW		AVERAGE		QUICK

Data collected with this question are shown in Table 36. An analysis of these data indicate that 17.9% (10/56) of the court reporters who responded to this question perceived themselves as being "Quick" (5) as sports participants while in high school. Of the 56 participants who responded to this question, 41.1% (23/56) rated their perceptions of themselves as sports participants as "Average," while 23.2% (13/56) gave themselves a rating of "Above Average" or Quick." Four of the 60 court reporters who returned completed research instruments elected not to respond to this question.

READING

From personal experience as an instructor of court reporting and from the results of research on court reporting, it is evident that to be a competent court reporter one must have a high degree of concentration, as well as a retentive memory. One leisure time activity that requires concentration and retention is reading. To determine court reporters' opinions on reading as one of their high school leisure time activities, Question 37 was designed. This question was designed to collect interval data. To indicate their opinions, participants could check from "Dislike" to "Enjoy" on a five-point Likert scale.

The Question:

37. WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL, HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT READING?
(CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1	2	3	4	5
DISLIKED IT VERY MUCH		NEITHER LIKED NOR DISLIKED IT		ENJOYED IT VERY MUCH

Data collected with this question were used to design Table 37. These data show that all 60 participants responded to this question. It is evident from these data that 58.3% (35/60) of those individuals involved in the study "Enjoyed" reading when they were in high school. Only four, or 15.0%, of the research population checked (4) which meant that as high school students they enjoyed reading "Moderately." Thirteen took a neutral position when they checked (3) that they "Neither Liked nor Disliked" reading. Only 5.0% of the research population, or three participants, said they "Somewhat Disliked" reading when they checked (2) on the five-point scale.

To determine the type of reading material that court reporters read when they were in high school, Question 38 asked:

The Question:

38. WHAT DID YOU READ?

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS ____________
CURRENT MAGAZINES ____________
DOCUMENTARIES ____________
BIOGRAPHIES ____________
FICTION ____________

It is evident from data in Table 38 that all 60 participants listed the type of material that they read. Twenty-five of these 60 individuals, or 41.7% of the research population, read documentaries; 13 read biographies; 10 read local newspapers; eight read current

TABLE 36

PERCEPTION OF SELF IN SPORTS ACTIVITIES (PARTICIPANTS)

N=56

PERCEPTION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Slow	2	3.6	3.6
Below Average	8	14.3	17.9
Average	23	41.1	58.9
Above Average	13	23.2	82.1
Quick	10	17.9	100.0
TOTALS	56	100.0	100.0

TABLE 37

FEELING TOWARD READING (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

FEELING (READING)	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Disliked It Very Much	0	0.0	0.0
Disliked It Somewhat	3	5.0	5.0
Neither Liked Nor Disliked It	13	21.7	26.7
Enjoyed It Moderately	9	15.0	41.7
Enjoyed It Very Much	35	58.3	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

magazines; and three read fiction.

One of the responsibilities of a court reporter is to be able to read back the notes that are written in a proceeding or meeting when requested to do so. To determine the perceptions that participants had of themselves as readers, Question 39 was written.

The Question:

39. AS A READER, DID YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE:
(CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1	2	3	4	5
POOR		GOOD		EXCELLENT

Data collected by means of this question constitute Table 39. In expressing their perceptions of themselves as readers, 25 participants, or 41.7%, checked "Very Good" (4), while 13 participants, or 21.7%, checked "Excellent" (5), for a combined total of 63.4% of the research population. Eighteen participants, or 30.0%, checked "Good" (3), with only four participants checking "Poor" (1) or "Average" (2).

PERSONAL OPINIONS

The last section of the research instrument included three questions that were designed to solicit the reactions of participants about their opinions toward becoming discouraged by not achieving a predetermined goal; their opinions toward a stressful situation; and their opinions toward their persistence with an activity. These three questions were prepared to collect interval data using a five-point Likert scale.

Each of these questions were written in the form of a scenario to present a situation that discussed discouragement, stress, and persistence.

TABLE 38

KIND OF MATERIAL READ (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

MATERIAL READ	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
No Reading Material	1	1.7	1.7
Local Newspapers	10	16.7	18.3
Current Magazines	8	13.3	31.7
Documentaries	25	41.7	73.3
Biographies	13	21.7	95.0
Fiction	3	5.0	5.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

TABLE 39

PERCEPTION (PARTICIPANTS) OF SELF AS READERS

N=60

PERCEPTION	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Poor	1	1.7	1.7
Average	3	5.0	6.7
Good	18	30.0	36.7
Very Good	25	41.7	78.3
Excellent	13	21.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

DISCOURAGEMENT

To determine if court reporters would become discouraged as students in not achieving a predetermined goal, Question 40 was written.

The Question:

40. YOU HAVE WORKED ONE MONTH TO REACH A SPEED OF 140 WORDS PER MINUTE ON THE SHORTHAND MACHINE. YOU HAVE NOT ACHIEVED THIS GOAL. WOULD YOU BE DISCOURAGED? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1 2 3 4 5
NOT AT ALL MODERATELY SO VERY MUCH

The data collected from this question are found in Table 40. Data in this table show that 85.0% (42/60) of the court reporters involved in this study indicated that they would be "Moderately So" to "Very Much" discouraged if they could not achieve a speed of 140 words per minute on the shorthand machine after one month of practise. Only two members of the research population checked that they would "Not at All" be discouraged if after one month practise on the shorthand machine they could not achieve 140 words per minute.

STRESS

Question 41 was written to determine the opinions of participants to a stressful situation. This question presented a scenario that placed the student in a testing situation to determine graduation from the court reporting program.

The Question:

41. YOU ARE WRITING YOUR FINAL TEST TO ACHIEVE 180 WORDS PER MINUTE ON THE SHORTHAND MACHINE IN ORDER TO GRADUATE FROM THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM. WOULD THE STRESS AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO PERFORM? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1 2 3 4 5
NOT AT ALL MODERATELY SO VERY MUCH

Data collected by the use of this question are found in Table 41. These data show that only 5.0% (3/60) of the participants of the research population gave the opinion that if they were a member of

TABLE 40

DISCOURAGEMENT LEVEL AS COURT REPORTING STUDENTS (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

DISCOURAGEMENT LEVEL	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Not At All	2	3.3	3.3
Somewhat	7	11.7	15.0
Moderately So	20	33.3	48.3
Discouraged	22	36.7	85.0
Very Much	9	15.0	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

TABLE 41

STRESS LEVEL AS COURT REPORTING STUDENTS (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

STRESS LEVEL	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Not At All	0	0.0	0.0
Somewhat	3	5.0	5.0
Moderately So	21	35.0	40.0
Distressed	17	28.3	68.3
Very Much	19	31.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

the scenario that was presented they would feel no stress because they checked "Not At All" (1). The remaining 57 of the 60 participating court reporters checked that they would find the situation described in the scenario to be either "Moderately" stressful or "Very Much" stressful to them.

PERSISTENCE

To determine how persistent the members of the research population were in pursuing an activity, Question 42 was written. This question was written so that in responding to it all the participant had to do was to place a check mark on the five-point Likert scale.

The Question:

42. WHEN YOU UNDERTAKE AN ACTIVITY, HOW PERSISTENT DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1	2	3	4	5
VERY LOW		AVERAGE		VERY HIGH

Table 42 includes the data that were collected with this question. These data show that 55.0% of the participants (33/60) checked (4) on the Likert scale indicating that their persistence was "Above Average" in their pursuit of any activity. Sixteen of the 60 participants, or 26.7%, checked (5) which indicated that they possessed a "High Level" of persistence when they undertook an activity. The ratings of (4) and (5) combined represented 81.7% of the participants. The remaining 11 court reporters, or 18.4%, checked "Average" (3) or "Below Average" (2) in persistence when an activity was being undertaken.

TABLE 42

PERSISTENCE LEVEL (PARTICIPANTS)

N=60

PERSISTENCE LEVEL	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	%	CUMULATIVE %
Very Low	0	0.0	0.0
Below Average	1	1.7	1.7
Average	10	16.7	18.3
Above Average	33	55.0	73.3
Very High	16	26.7	100.0
TOTALS	60	100.0	100.0

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter I of this thesis included a detailed outline of the research design and the methodology that was used to bring this study to its conclusion. Contents of that chapter also contained the problem statement, the major and supporting objectives of the study, the significance of the study, limitations of the study, operational definitions applicable to this research, and the identification of the research population.

Chapter II presented an historical overview of court reporting and a discussion of the court reporting program of study at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), Edmonton, Alberta. This court reporting program of study is approved by the National Shorthand Reporters Association. This Association is a professional organization designed to assure that reporters who enter the profession have the basic competencies required to fulfill their obligations. In order to do this, the Association has an approval program for schools offering court reporting programs of study. A Board on Approved Reporter Training carries out this function as a part of the Association.

Also contained in the second chapter was a review of the professional literature and research that was either directly or tangentially related to this study.

Chapter III presented the data that were collected with the research instrument used in this study. These data were analyzed and presented in tabular form for ease of presentation and analysis in that chapter.

The final chapter of this thesis, Chapter IV, will be divided into three parts. The first part will contain a summary of the research methodology. The second part will include the observations and conclusions derived from the findings of this study. In the third part, recommendations will be made to NAIT for the benefit of the court reporting program of study, as well as recommendations to the National Shorthand Reporters Association. Recommendations for further research will comprise the final section of this chapter.

SUMMARY

Court reporting is a very old profession dating back to Biblical times. Many different handwritten shorthand systems were used through the centuries, developing from the use of a quill to a pen. The first shorthand machine was developed in 1868, and today the shorthand machine is widely used in the court reporting field. In recent years, the computer and an electric shorthand machine have been devised for court reporting.

An official court reporter is a sworn officer of the court. As such, a court reporter takes down in shorthand the verbatim proceedings of the court and of conferences and provides a transcript of such proceedings. It is essential for court reporters to be courteous, tactful, understanding, and dignified in the performance of their duties.

THE PROBLEM

The research problem and major objective of this study was to identify those characteristics of court reporting personnel who had completed a two-year program in court reporting at a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution in Alberta, which provided them with the basic entry skills so that they could become employed as freelance or official court reporters.

In addition to the major objective of the study, the study had the following three supportive objectives: to identify the graduates of the court reporting program of study at NAIT and who were employed as freelance reporters in Alberta at the time of this study; to identify the graduates of the court reporting program of study at NAIT and who were employed as official court reporters in Alberta at the time of this study; and to place each characteristic that is identified from this study into broad groups of classifications.

From personal knowledge concerning the graduates of NAIT's court reporting program of study, the researcher was able to identify those court reporters who were freelance and official court reporters employed in Alberta. Of the research population of 62 court reporters employed in Alberta, 53 are official court reporters, and nine are freelance court reporters.

The categorization of characteristics identified in this study is found in a subsequent section of this chapter.

THE POPULATION

The population of this study consisted of the 62 court reporters who had successfully completed the two-year court reporting program of study at NAIT and who were employed in Alberta as either freelance or official court reporters at the time of the study.

RELATED RESEARCH

The researcher conducted an information retrieval search of the ERIC data base, as well as a manual search of the standard indices for reporting the findings of educational research. A review of the research literature revealed that no research on the characteristics of court reporting personnel had been completed. A study was completed in 1968 in the United States by Gilsdorf which dealt with "Predicting the Success of Machine Shorthand Students as Related to a Career in the Field of Court Reporting." This study concluded that there is a definite relationship between a high grade-point average in high school and the number of words per minute that a student in court reporting can write on the shorthand machine. However, in the final analysis, the study concluded that it was difficult to predict success in court reporting (pp. 105-109).

Only one article in the professional literature on court reporting dealt with the characteristics of court reporters. This article was written by Kacen in 1976 in the United States. The major characteristics identified in this article were:

1. Good knowledge of English;
2. Persistence or drive;
3. High general intelligence;
4. Good manual dexterity;
5. Ability to work under pressure;
6. Maturity;
7. Courteous manner;
8. Previous work experience;
9. College degree (p. 8).

A study completed in 1964 in Edmonton by Benedict was concerned with criteria for predicting shorthand success. This study concluded that Science 9, Language 9, SCAT Verbal, and Reading 9 were the best predictors of success in Shorthand 10. Shorthand 10 and Language 10 were found to be the best predictors of success in Shorthand 20 (p. 47).

The six studies by Schindelka, Dusseault, Stewart, Puffer, Jampolsky, and Fisher all emphasized the need to consider student characteristics within an educational setting.

METHODOLOGY

The research instrument used for this study was a questionnaire. Demographic data, ordinal data, and interval data using a modified Likert scale were collected with this instrument. Prior to being used in the major study, the questionnaire was checked by a specialist in instrument design and was pre-tested in a pilot study. Those participating in the pilot study were first- and second-year court reporting students at NAIT at the time of the study, as well as the court reporting staff. As a result of this pilot study, minor revisions were made to the questionnaire before it was used in the major investigation.

Upon acquiring the names and addresses of the program graduates working in Alberta at the time of the study, a covering letter was prepared which accompanied the questionnaire when it was mailed to each member of the research population. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was also enclosed with the research instrument. As a result of the initial mailing, 55 completed questionnaires were returned. This represented a return of 91%.

A follow-up letter was prepared for those who did not meet the requested submission deadline. As a result of the follow-up letter, five more completed questionnaires were returned.

This procedure yielded a return of a total of 60 (97%) completed questionnaires. All 60 completed questionnaires were processed and analyzed.

The data from the research instruments were coded by the researcher and keypunched by personnel of the Division of Educational Research Services, Faculty of Education. The frequency program selected from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to generate frequencies and percentages. These frequencies and percentages were placed in tabular form for presentation and analysis to determine the findings of this study.

MAJOR FINDINGS

1. The majority of the participants of the study were in their late teens, with 45% being 18 years of age. Participants between the ages of 17, 18, and 19 accounted for 76.7% of the research population.

2. The majority (91.7%) of the participating court reporters of this study were single when they enrolled as students in the court reporting program of study.

3. English was the first language of 96.7% of the research population. The two individuals who stated English was not their first language learned English within the first five years of their life.

4. The academic program of study in high school was the program the majority (95%) of the study participants completed.

5. Eighty-five percent of the participants were high school graduates.

6. More than half (58.9%) of the participants achieved a Grade 12 academic average of 70% or better, and 70.9% involved in the research achieved 70% or better in English 30 or 33.

7. Thirty-eight of the 60 participants (63.3%) could not write a shorthand system other than machine shorthand.

8. Fifty-seven of the 60 participants (95%) studied typewriting in high school.

9. Forty of the 60 participants (66.6%) played at least one musical instrument.

10. Forty-five (75%) of the 60 participants of this study were involved in some type of extracurricular activity when they were in high school.

11. Only one person of the 60 participants of the study indicated she had not been employed either part-time or full-time prior to entry into the court reporting program of study.

12. Eighteen of the 60 participants (30.0%) worked part-time while enrolled in the court reporting program of study. Six of these 18 participants were of the opinion that their work had a negative effect on their performance as court reporting students.

13. Only five of the 60 participants (8.3%) were not involved in a sports activity as high school students.

14. Only 5% of the research population, or three participants, said they "somewhat disliked" reading. Participants' perception of themselves as readers indicated 25 felt they were "very good," and 13 felt they were "excellent," for a combined total of 63.4%.

15. A total of 85.0% (42/60) participating court reporters stated they would be either "moderately so" to "very much discouraged" when placed in a discouragement-producing scenario.

16. When placed in a stress-producing scenario, 57 of the 60 participants (95.0%) stated they would be "moderately" to "very much" under stress.

17. The majority of the participants of the study (81.7%) rated themselves "above average" to "very high" in level of persistence when they undertook an activity.

OBSERVATIONS

It was apparent to the researcher that the research population of this study were very cooperative in answering the research questionnaire. This is evidenced by the fact that 60 of the 62 court reporters contacted (97%) completed and returned the questionnaire. Because of this high rate of return, it is evident that those who cooperated in this study implied a good deal of interest in its results. A copy of the research abstract will be sent to all participating court reporters.

The researcher's colleagues on staff in the court reporting program of study at NAIT have been most helpful and enthusiastic concerning this research. NAIT management have also expressed interest in the study and its outcome.

The research instrument had a number of weaknesses which were uncovered during data analysis. Participants were asked whether or not their first language was English. However, if it was not, they were not asked to identify the first language they spoke. This could have been useful information. Participants were also asked how they perceived themselves as students of shorthand. This question was referring to their high school experience. Since participants gave their perceptions of themselves as both high school students and court reporting students, this question should have included the phrase "in high school."

It would have been useful and interesting to have cross-referenced the data received with regard to part-time employment while enrolled in the court reporting program of study with positive or negative effect on the student's performance. As this was not done, this could be considered a weakness of the research design.

CONCLUSIONS

From the research findings of this study, it was found that the majority of those involved showed these characteristics:

1. High school graduates (Table 3),

2. Single when enrolled in the court reporting program of study (Table 4),

3. Spoke English as their first language (Table 5),

4. Completed an academic program of study as high school students (Table 8),

5. Achieved a Grade 12 academic average of 70% or better (Table 10),

6. Achieved 70% or better in English 30 or 33 (Table 11),

7. Had not studied shorthand in high school (Table 17),

8. Studied typewriting in high school (Table 22),

9. Played a musical instrument (Table 26),

10. Involved in high school extracurricular activities (Table 28),

11. Employed prior to entry into the court reporting program of study (Table 29),

12. Participated in a variety of sporting activities (Table 35),

13. Possessed an affinity towards reading (Table 37),

14. Possessed a high level of persistence (Table 42).

15. When presented with a scenario that was descriptive of a situation that would cause discouragement, the majority of the participants indicated they could function in that situation (Table 40).

16. When presented with a scenario that was descriptive of a situation that would cause stress, the majority of the participants indicated they could function in that situation (Table 41).

17. Another conclusion of this study was that the participants who indicated they were employed while students found that their employment was not beneficial to them as students (Tables 33 and 34).

CATEGORIZATION OF CHARACTERISTICS

One of the supporting objectives of this study was to place each characteristic that was identified into a broad classification. The broad classifications for placing each characteristic identified in the research were personal background, educational preparation, extracurricular and leisure time activities, and personality.

From the findings of this study, the following characteristics were placed under the classifications listed below:

Personal

Young of age (late teens)
Marital status - single
English - first language

Educational

Graduate of academic program of study in high school
Grade 12 academic average - 70%
English 30 or 33 - 70% or better
Mastery of typewriting in high school

Personality

Possess an ability to cope with discouragement
Possess an ability to cope with stress
Exhibit a high level of persistence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and conclusions of this study have implications for the prospective court reporting student, the court reporting program of study, the administrators of such a program, and the National Shorthand Reporters Association.

The recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions of this study which were derived from an analysis of the data that were collected with the research questionnaire.

THE PROSPECTIVE COURT REPORTING STUDENT

Prospective court reporting students may be successful provided they have the educational prerequisites which include the educational characteristics of successful court reporting personnel that are listed in this chapter. Guidance to prospective students should begin at the high school level where they can be made aware of the characteristics that a successful court reporter must possess. Therefore, brochures giving pertinent data with regard to the field of court reporting, including necessary preparation, should be made available to those interested high school students.

THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM OF STUDY

Educational prerequisites for entry into the court reporting program of study must be established, using as a guide the characteristics of a successful court reporter that were identified in this study. Adherence to these prerequisites is essential in the selection of prospective students and to the success of the court reporting program of study.

Personal interviews with prospective students, using the Interview Schedule which resulted from this study, should be conducted by the program head of the court reporting program of study. The Interview Schedule referred to can be found in Appendix D, page 142, of this study.

A public relations program should be developed with feeder high schools to inform prospective students in these high schools of the educational requirements for a court reporting program of study. This could be done through the use of a brochure which provides the prospective student with pertinent information about the field of court reporting and also necessary preparation that an applicant must have for admission into the court reporting program of study. This preparation should be based on the characteristics that were identified in this study. It is essential that high school students attracted to the court reporting program of study have the necessary background if they are to have a successful experience.

THE ADMINISTRATORS OF THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM OF STUDY

The administrators of the court reporting program of study should establish educational prerequisites which include the educational characteristics of successful court reporters that were identified in this research. These characteristics should be used as part of the admission criteria for the court reporting program of study.

NATIONAL SHORTHAND REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

The characteristics of successful court reporters, resulting from this study, should be placed with the National Shorthand Reporters Association to determine if the schools approved by this Association consider these characteristics to be realistic as admission criteria for their program.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

It is recommended that this research be replicated using a larger population of court reporters consisting of those who are employed throughout North America. Such a study might use the results of this research as its data base to identify additional characteristics that were not identified in the current study.

It is further recommended that a research investigation be undertaken using two discreet populations. One population would include those who dropped out of the court reporting program of study. The second population of this proposed study would include those who have successfully completed the court reporting program of study. The characteristics identified from this study could be cross-referenced to identify additional characteristics of a successful court reporter.

It is also recommended that a research investigation be conducted that would involve judges and other legal personnel to determine the value judgments that these individuals have towards court reporters.

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APPENDIX A

A copy of the research questionnaire makes up this appendix.

COVER SHEET

QUESTIONNAIRE

TOPIC: Identifying Characteristics of Court Reporting Personnel Who Completed a Two-Year Program in Court Reporting at a Nonuniversity, Postsecondary Institution in Alberta

In 1972, the court reporting program was established at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Since that time 95 persons have successfully completed the prescribed program for court reporting.

A preliminary review of the standard indices that report the results of educational research show that no research has been conducted to date that has identified the characteristics of court reporting personnel.

> The purpose of this study is to identify those characteristics of court reporting personnel who have completed a two-year program in court reporting at a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution in Alberta which provided them with the basic entry skills so that they may become employed as freelance or official court reporters.

Your role as a participant in this study is to complete the attached questionnaire and return it to the researcher by the established deadline date.

DIRECTIONS TO PARTICIPANT

This questionnaire has been prepared for research purposes. The information provided by you to questions on this research instrument will:

1. Be used only for research purposes.
2. Be treated as privileged information.
3. Remain confidential to the researcher.

In responding to each statement you are to check (✓) the most appropriate word, phrase, or sentence. In some instances you are requested to write in a short comment to a statement.

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF COURT REPORTING PERSONNEL WHO COMPLETED A TWO-YEAR PROGRAM IN COURT REPORTING AT A NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION IN ALBERTA

QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. What is your name? ______________________

2. What was your name at the time you were enrolled in the court reporting program at NAIT?
____

3. How old were you when you entered the court reporting program at NAIT?
____

4. What was your marital status at the time you attended the court reporting program?
Single ______________________
Married ______________________
Other (Specify) ______________________

5. Is English your first language? ________ Yes ________ No

6. If No, at what age did you learn the English language?
0 - 5 years ______________________
6 - 10 years ______________________
11 - 15 years ______________________
16 - 20 years ______________________
Other (Specify) ______________________

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY - GENERAL

7. The high school that you attended was in a:
City Location ______________________
Suburban Location ______________________
Rural Location ______________________
Other (Specify) ______________________

8. Please identify the program in which you were registered in high school.
Academic ______________________
Business ______________________
Vocational ______________________
General ______________________

9. What was the highest level you attained in high school?

Grade 10 ____________
Grade 11 ____________
Grade 12 ____________
High School Graduate ____________

10. If applicable, what was your Grade 12 academic average?

____

11. If applicable, what was your grade in English 30 or 33?

____

12. Did you attend a nonuniversity, postsecondary institution before you entered the court reporting program?

______ Yes ______ No

13. If Yes, please identify the program in which you were registered.

____

14. Did you attend university before you entered the court reporting program?

______ Yes ______ No

15. If Yes, please identify the faculty in which you were registered.

____

16. How many years was it since you last attended a formal school before you were admitted to the court reporting program?

0 - 2 years ____________
3 - 5 years ____________
6 - 10 years ____________
11 - 15 years ____________
Other (Specify) ____________

17. Do you write another shorthand system other than machine shorthand?

______ Yes ______ No

18. If Yes, please identify:

Pitman Traditional ____________
Pitman Shorterhand ____________
Gregg ____________
Forkner ____________
Take 30 ____________
Other (Specify) ____________

19. If your response to Question 17 was Yes, what level did you complete in the shorthand system you studied?

Shorthand 10 ________
Shorthand 20 ________
Shorthand 30 ________
Other (Specify) ________

20. If your response to Question 17 was Yes, how many words per minute did you attain in the shorthand system you studied?

____

21. As a student of shorthand, how did you perceive yourself? (Check the appropriate space)

1 2 3 4 5
Slow Average Quick

22. Did you take a course in typewriting in high school?

________ Yes ________ No

23. If Yes, what level of typewriting did you complete?

Typewriting 10 ________
Typewriting 20 ________
Typewriting 30 ________
Other (Specify) ________

24. If your response to Question 22 was Yes, how many words per minute did you attain in typewriting?

____

25. As a student of typewriting, how did you perceive yourself? (Check the appropriate space)

1 2 3 4 5
Slow Average Quick

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

26. Name any musical instrument that you play: ________

27. As a student of music, how did you perceive yourself? (Check the appropriate space)

N/A ________ 1 2 3 4 5
Slow Average Quick

28. In high school what extracurricular activities were you involved in? (Check those that apply)

- Music ____________
- Drama ____________
- Sports ____________
- Cheerleading ____________
- School Paper ____________
- School Radio ____________
- Photography ____________
- Other (Specify) ____________

WORK HISTORY

29. What has been your heaviest employment commitment prior to enrolling in the court reporting program?

- Never Employed ____________
- Employed Part-Time ____________
- Employed Full-Time ____________

30. For how long a period were you employed? ____________

31. At what occupation were you employed? ____________

32. Did you use typewriting in your employment?

________ Yes ________ No

33. While in the court reporting program were you also employed?

________ Yes ________ No

34. If you were employed while in the court reporting program, what effect did this have on your school performance?

- No Effect ____________
- Positive Effect ____________
- Negative Effect ____________

LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

35. What sport(s) did you participate in while in high school? Check those that apply)

- Skiing ____________
- Golfing ____________
- Tennis ____________
- Racquetball ____________
- Curling ____________
- Baseball ____________
- Hockey ____________
- Other (Specify) ____________

36. As a sports participator, how did you perceive yourself? (Check the appropriate space)

1	2	3	4	5
Slow		Average		Quick

37. While in high school, how did you feel about reading? (Check the appropriate space)

1	2	3	4	5
Disliked It Very Much		Neither Liked Nor Disliked It		Enjoyed It Very Much

38. What did you read?

Local Newspapers ____________
Current Magazines ____________
Documentaries ____________
Biographies ____________
Fiction ____________

39. As a reader, did you consider yourself to be: (Check the appropriate space)

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Good		Excellent

PERSONAL OPINIONS

Please divorce yourself as much as possible from your present station in life and try to put yourself in the position you were in when you were a student in the court reporting program. Now, answer the following questions.

40. You have worked one month to reach a speed of 140 words per minute on the shorthand machine. You have not achieved this goal. Would you be discouraged? (Check the appropriate space)

1	2	3	4	5
Not At All		Moderately So		Very Much

41. You are writing your final test to achieve 180 words per minute on the shorthand machine in order to graduate from the court reporting program. Would the stress affect your ability to perform? (Check the appropriate space)

1	2	3	4	5
Not At All		Moderately So		Very Much

42. When you undertake an activity, how persistent do you consider yourself to be? (Check the appropriate space)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Low		Average		Very High

APPENDIX B

A copy of the covering letter used to explain the study and its purpose and a copy of the follow-up letter sent to participants who were late in submitting their research questionnaire make up this appendix.

**NORTHERN ALBERTA
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

**11762-106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada, T5G 2R1**

September 10, 1980

Dear

In addition to teaching court reporting courses at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, I am also working toward my Master's Degree in Education at The University of Alberta. Part of the requirement for the degree is the completion of either a major project or a thesis. I have elected to complete a thesis and have selected as my thesis topic "Identifying Characteristics of Court Reporting Personnel Who Completed a Two-Year Program in Court Reporting at a Nonuniversity, Postsecondary Institution in Alberta".

The major purpose of this study can be found on the cover page of the enclosed questionnaire. As a graduate of the two-year program at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and as a resident of Alberta, your opinions are very important. Therefore, I would like you to participate in this study by completing the questionnaire and returning it to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by September 24, 1980. If this study is to be meaningful and successful, a high rate of return is essential.

Alberta Advanced Education and Manpower

Results of the pilot study show that to complete the questionnaire takes only 10 minutes of the participant's time. It would be appreciated if you would take that amount of time from your busy schedule and complete the questionnaire.

Any information that is provided to me will be treated as privileged information and will be seen by no one but me. When the research is completed, all research questionnaires will be destroyed.

For those who participate in the study, a copy of the research abstract will be mailed.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued success with your work as a court reporter.

Yours truly,

Bernice Bottas
Graduate Student

c.c. Dr. Clarence H. Preitz
Department Advisor

NORTHERN ALBERTA
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

11762-106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada, T5G 2R1

September 26, 1980

Dear

This is a follow-up to the letter and questionnaire I sent you on September 10. That letter was with regard to my study on "Identifying Characteristics of Court Reporting Personnel Who Completed a Two-Year Program in Court Reporting at a Nonuniversity, Postsecondary Institution in Alberta".

Some completed returns have already been received. For a study of this nature to have maximum value and be representative of those characteristics possessed by successful court reporters, a high percentage of returns is needed.

Because there is a possibility you may have misplaced the original questionnaire, I have enclosed another one for you to complete. It would be appreciated if you would return the completed questionnaire in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by October 10.

The information that you provide me with will be treated as privileged information and will be used by the researcher only.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours truly,

Bernice Bottas
Graduate Student

Alberta Advanced Education and Manpower

APPENDIX C

There were 60 pages of raw data generated by the computer program. Of these 60 pages, some have been selected and placed in this appendix for the benefit of the reader.

The following question was used to generate the data on the next page:

The Question:

3. HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU ENTERED THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM AT NAIT? ____________________

University of Alberta

```
SPSS BATCH SYSTEM                                                     12/16/80      PAGE    3

FILE   NONAME   (CREATION DATE = 12/16/80)

Q3

                                           RELATIVE  ADJUSTED    CUM
                               ABSOLUTE      FREQ      FREQ      FREQ
CATEGORY LABEL          CODE     FREQ       (PCT)     (PCT)     (PCT)

                         17.       11        18.3      18.3      18.3

                         18.       27        45.0      45.0      63.3

                         19.        8        13.3      13.3      76.7

                         20.        3         5.0       5.0      81.7

                         21.        4         6.7       6.7      88.3

                         22.        4         6.7       6.7      95.0

                         23.        1         1.7       1.7      96.7

                         27.        1         1.7       1.7      98.3

                         37.        1         1.7       1.7     100.0
                                 ------    ------    ------
                        TOTAL      60       100.0     100.0

VALID CASES      60      MISSING CASES      0
```

The following question was used to generate the data on the next page:

The Question:

4. WHAT WAS YOUR MARITAL STATUS AT THE TIME YOU ATTENDED THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM?

SINGLE ________________
MARRIED ________________
OTHER ________________

University of Alberta

```
SPSS BATCH SYSTEM                                                    12/16/80       PAGE    4

FILE   NONAME   (CREATION DATE = 12/16/80)

Q4

                                            RELATIVE  ADJUSTED     CUM
                                  ABSOLUTE    FREQ      FREQ      FREQ
CATEGORY LABEL              CODE    FREQ     (PCT)     (PCT)     (PCT)

                              1.      55      91.7      91.7      91.7

                              2.       4       6.7       6.7      98.3

                              3.       1       1.7       1.7     100.0
                                  ------    ------    ------
                           TOTAL      60     100.0     100.0

VALID CASES      60      MISSING CASES      0
```

The following question was used to generate the data on the next page:

The Question:

5. IS ENGLISH YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE? ________ YES ________ NO

```
SPSS BATCH SYSTEM                                                                      12/16/80        PAGE    5

FILE    NONAME    (CREATION DATE = 12/16/80)

Q5

                                                    RELATIVE  ADJUSTED    CUM
                                          ABSOLUTE    FREQ      FREQ      FREQ
CATEGORY LABEL                     CODE     FREQ      (PCT)     (PCT)     (PCT)

                                    1.        58      96.7      96.7      96.7

                                    2.         2       3.3       3.3     100.0
                                         -------   -------   -------
                                   TOTAL      60     100.0     100.0

VALID CASES       60      MISSING CASES      0
```

University of Alberta

The following question was used to generate the data on the next page:

The Question:

12. DID YOU ATTEND A NONUNIVERSITY, POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION BEFORE YOU ENTERED THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM?

________ YES   ________ NO

```
SPSS BATCH SYSTEM                                                       12/16/80      PAGE   14

FILE   NONAME   (CREATION DATE = 12/16/80)

Q12

                                                    RELATIVE  ADJUSTED    CUM
                                         ABSOLUTE     FREQ      FREQ     FREQ
CATEGORY LABEL                   CODE      FREQ      (PCT)     (PCT)    (PCT)

                                   1.         8       13.3      13.3     13.3

                                   2.        52       86.7      86.7    100.0
                                          ------    ------    ------
                                 TOTAL       60      100.0     100.0

VALID CASES      60      MISSING CASES      0
```

The following question was used to generate the data on the next page:

The Question:

30. HOW LONG A PERIOD WERE YOU EMPLOYED? ________________

University of Alberta

```
SPSS BATCH SYSTEM                                                              12/16/80        PAGE   44

FILE    NONAME    (CREATION DATE = 12/16/80)

Q30

                                                  RELATIVE  ADJUSTED    CUM
                                       ABSOLUTE     FREQ      FREQ      FREQ
CATEGORY LABEL                  CODE     FREQ      (PCT)     (PCT)     (PCT)

                                  2.        7       11.7      12.1      12.1

                                  3.        9       15.0      15.5      27.6

                                  4.        2        3.3       3.4      31.0

                                  5.        1        1.7       1.7      32.8

                                  6.        3        5.0       5.2      37.9

                                  7.        1        1.7       1.7      39.7

                                  8.        4        6.7       6.9      46.6

                                  9.        1        1.7       1.7      48.3

                                 12.        3        5.0       5.2      53.4

                                 18.        1        1.7       1.7      55.2

                                 24.       13       21.7      22.4      77.6

                                 27.        1        1.7  [illegible].7      79.3

                                 36.        6       10.0      10.3      89.7

                                 48.        2        3.3       3.4      93.1

                                 52.        1        1.7       1.7      94.8

                                 60.        2        3.3       3.4      98.3

                                132.        1        1.7       1.7     100.0

                                999.        2        3.3   MISSING     100.0
                                       ------     ------    ------
                               TOTAL       60      100.0     100.0

VALID CASES      58       MISSING CASES       2
```

The following question was used to generate the data on the next page:

The Question:

41. YOU ARE WRITING YOUR FINAL TEST TO ACHIEVE 180 WORDS PER MINUTE ON THE SHORTHAND MACHINE IN ORDER TO GRADUATE FROM THE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM. WOULD THE STRESS AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO PERFORM? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE SPACE)

1	2	3	4	5
Not At All		Moderately So		Very Much

```
SPSS BATCH SYSTEM                                                           12/16/80        PAGE   56

FILE   NONAME    (CREATION DATE = 12/16/80)

Q41

                                                 RELATIVE   ADJUSTED     CUM
                                     ABSOLUTE      FREQ       FREQ       FREQ
CATEGORY LABEL              CODE       FREQ       (PCT)      (PCT)      (PCT)

                              2.         3         5.0        5.0        5.0

                              3.        21        35.0       35.0       40.0

                              4.        17        28.3       28.3       68.3

                              5.        19        31.7       31.7      100.0
                                      -------    -------    -------
                            TOTAL       60       100.0      100.0

VALID CASES       60       MISSING CASES      0
```

APPENDIX D

A copy of the Interview Schedule which resulted from this study makes up this appendix.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
FOR
PROSPECTIVE COURT REPORTING STUDENTS

Name ______________________________

Age ______________________________

Marital Status ____________________

What is your first language? ______________________

What high school do you attend or did you graduate from?

____

What program of study did you take in high school?

Academic ______
Business ______
Vocational ______
General ______

Do you have a high school diploma? ______ Yes ______ No

	Mid-Term Mark		Final Mark		Scheduled For Next Semester
English 30/33 -	____	or	____	or	____
Academic Courses -					
________________	____		____		____
________________	____		____		____
________________	____		____		____
________________	____		____		____
________________	____		____		____

Did you take typewriting in high school? -

10 ____ WPM ____
20 ____ WPM ____
30 ____ WPM ____

Do you play a musical instrument? ______ Yes ______ No

If Yes, please identify - ______________________

What extracurricular activities did you participate in (high school)?

____

What sports activities did you participate in (high school)?

____

What are your hobbies and recreational activities?

____

Do you enjoy reading? ______ Yes ______ No

What type of material do you normally read? ____________________

____

Are you easily discouraged?

1 2 3 4 5
Not At All Moderately So Very Much

Can you cope with stress?

1 2 3 4 5
Not At All Moderately So Very Much

When you undertake an activity, how persistent do you consider yourself to be?

1 2 3 4 5
Very Low Average Very High

How would three hours a night homework affect your social life?

1 2 3 4 5
Not At All Moderately So Very Much

VITA

NAME: Bernice G. Bottas

PLACE OF BIRTH: Dauphin, Manitoba

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1938 07 08

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta
Bachelor of Education in Vocation Education With Distinction
1970-76

University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta
Master of Education in Vocational Education
1979-81

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE:

Federal Government
Dauphin, Manitoba
Secretary
1957

Federal Government
Edmonton, Alberta
Secretary
1957-59

Canadian National Railways
Edmonton, Alberta
Secretary
1959-66

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
Edmonton, Alberta
Instructor
1968-

ORGANIZATIONS:

Member, Phi Delta Kappa, Professional Education Fraternity
Member, Alberta Business Educators Association